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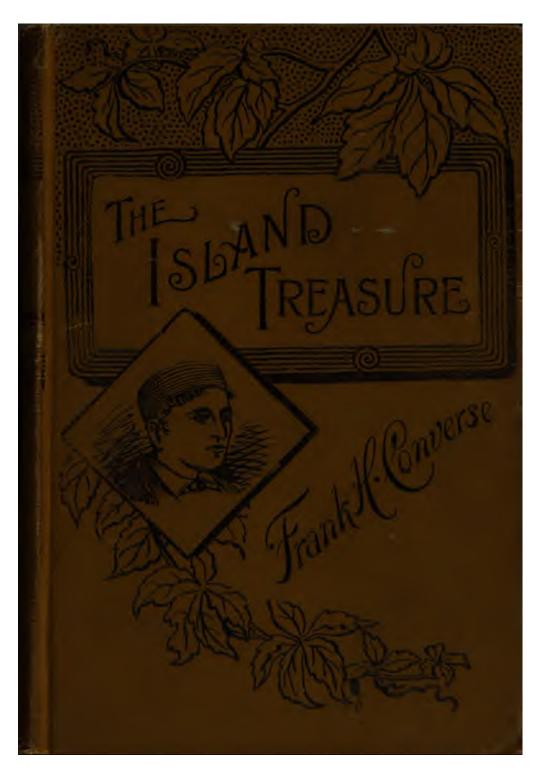
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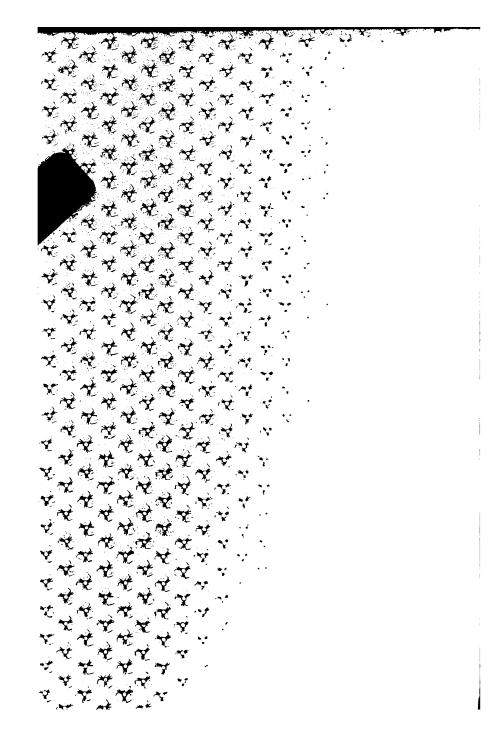
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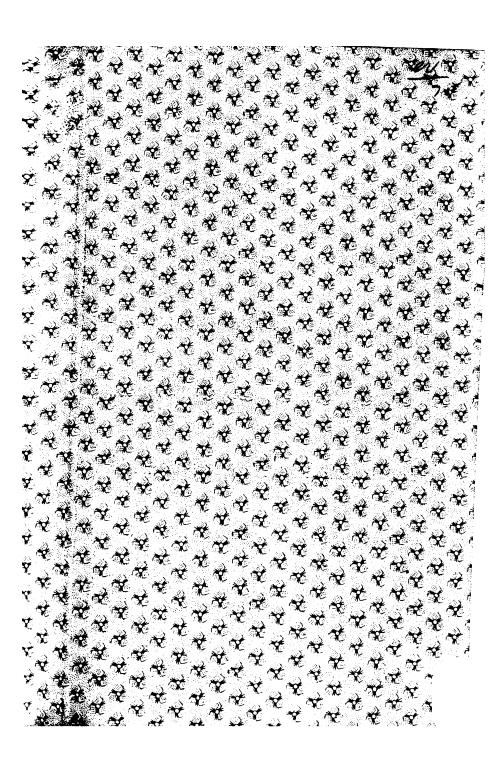
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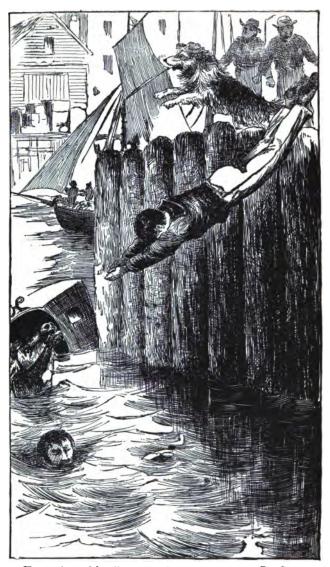
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Harry plunged headlong into the water, to rescue Dr. Gregg.

THE ISLAND TREASURE;

OR.

HARRY DARREL'S FORTUNES.

By FRANK H. CONVERSE,

Author of

'Pepper Adams," "Adventures of Tad," "Jack Bond's Queet," "Harry-Hale's Log-Book," etc., etc.

ILLUSTRATED.



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This One

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TO MY MOTHER,

WHO ENCOURAGED A LOVE OF READING IN EARLY YOUTH WHICH

HAS BEEN OF UNTOLD ASSISTANCE IN MY WORK, AND

TO MY WIFE,

WHO BY WORD AND DEED HAS ENCOURAGED ME TO PERSEVERE IN THE LITERARY WAY, THIS HUMBLE VOLUME IS DEDICATED, BY

THE AUTHOR.

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THE ISLAND TREASURE.

CHAPTER I.

HARRY DARREL MAKES HIS APPEARANCE.

JABEZ WELTER'S "office" was one of the lower front rooms of the old Welter homestead in Wayback. Mr. Welter himself was the village pettifogger, justice of the peace, and moneylender on a small scale.

At the time my story opens he was sitting at a writing-table sorting over some legal-looking documents. Mr. Jabez Welter was tall and sallow, with stooping shoulders and iron-gray hair.

Blair Welter, has seventeen-year-old son, stood leaning against the opposite wall with his hands in his pockets and a scowl on his heavy features. The scowl was due to a discussion going on between the two.

"And I say," growled Blair, continuing it, "that I've got a chance to sell the dog, and what's more, I mean to. It's nothing to you, anyway! You've gobbled everything else that Uncle Caleb left; you ought to be satisfied!"

Not a particularly respectful way of addressing one's father, you will say. But Blair, as an only son, had been spoiled, so Welter, Sr., was only reaping what he had sown.

Mr. Welter chose to ignore the latter part of his dutiful son's remarks.

"You won't sell Don with my consent!" he sharply returned. "He's too valuable as a watchdog, in the first place; and, by rights, Don belongs to Harry——"

"Who's been away at sea over two years without sending home a word or line," was the scornful interruption. "So what difference does that make? If he should ever get back I reckon you wouldn't be over-glad to see him."

There was a peculiar significance in Blair's tones which made Welter, Sr., wince involuntarily. A dull flush crossed his thin, parchment face.

"How dare you insinuate——" he began, when the sound of the front door being thrown open, followed by the scurrying of a dog's feet in the hall, accompanied by a chorus of delighted barkings, checked further speech.

Before Blair could step from the room to investigate, a handsome Scotch collie came tearing frantically in.

"What's the matter with you?" roughly demanded Blair; and as the dog, whose intelligent eyes fairly glistened with joy, dumbly signed in the

direction of the entry, a kick was all he received for his pains.

Poor Don fled back with a suppressed howl. A voice in the hall addressing the dog caused Blair and his father to utter a simultaneous exclamation.

"It's Harry—true as you live!" muttered Blair. And before Welter, Sr., could reply the door was flung hastily open admitting the hero—to use a conventional term—of my story.

"Abusing Don, as usual! You're the same coward and cur as when I left home!" said Harry Darrel, with a tremor of repressed anger in his voice.

Harry was a well-built young fellow of sixteen or thereabouts, with clear-out, resolute features, lightly touched with sea tan, dark eyes, and crisp hair out very short. His remarkably athletic frame was set off to excellent advantage by a jaunty sailor rig, similar to that worn by our naval seamen.

As Blair Welter had no response at command, Welter, Sr., coming to the rescue, literally threw himself into the breach of threatened peace.

"Why—a—Harry!" he nervously stammered, as, rising, he extended his hand; "how very unf—how very unexpected!"

"You were going to say how very unfortunate. Why, please? And where is my—Mr. Caleb Welter?"

Jabez Welter glanced helplessly at his son, who stood gnawing his under-lip nervously, looking

everywhere but in Harry Darrel's face. Caressing Don's soft muzzle with his brown fingers, Harry repeated:

"Why unfortunate? and where is Mr. Caleb?"

Jabez Welter, pulling himself together with an effort, sighed deeply. Laying down his pen he drew out a handkerchief, which he dabbed across his eyes.

"My brother died suddenly with heart disease three weeks ago yesterday," he said, with another sigh.

Harry Darrel had schooled himself to unusual self-possession for one so young, but at this entirely unexpected news he turned very pale.

"Mr. Caleb dead!" he exclaimed, in a dazed sort of way. "Why didn't some of you write and tell me?"

"Seeing that we didn't happen to know what part of the world Uncle Sam's navy was in, or even the name of your ship, we couldn't, very well."

Thus said Blair Welter, speaking for the first time.

"Navy?" echoed Harry, in surprised accents. "Why, I haven't been in the navy! Didn't Mr. Caleb tell you, when he came back from New York, that finding I was too young for a naval recruit he put me aboard the St. Mary school-ship, where I've been now for two years past?"

Harry's surprise was reflected in the faces of the two to whom he addressed himself. "My brother Caleb told us nothing," returned Welter, Sr., biting his thin lips. "He has never mentioned your name since you left here, nor spoke of hearing from you in any way."

"So instead of earning money in the navy, you've been all this time in a school-ship under expense?" was Blair Welter's next pleasing remark. Why he so disliked Harry Darrel the latter had never been able to tell; but since his earliest remembrance it had always been so.

"Not at your's or your father's expense!" returned Harry, with aggravating coolness. "A hundred dollars," he went on quickly, "has covered everything. In return, I've had the best kind of schooling as well as nautical training. We've made two long summer cruises, and I rated as A. B. when I graduated. So Mr. Caleb's money was not all wasted."

Harry did not add that he had carried away the medal for scholarship and seamanship both, or that a very little practical experience would qualify him for a second mate's berth in what is now the apology for our merchant-marine service.

"That's lucky," sneered Blair, "for it's all of Uncle Caleb's money you'll be likely to have any benefit from, for he didn't leave any will, and so——"

"As—er—his sole surviving legal heir, Harry," interposed Welter, Sr., nervously shuffling the papers before him, "the homestead and what little per-

sonal property left after paying his debts falls to me exclusively."

Now as Mr. Caleb Welter in his life-time had always pleaded poverty, despite the belief of some in Wayback that he was a bit of a miser, Harry had never cherished any expectations connected with his decease—in fact, he had not thought much about it—so that at first the information did not seem so very alarming.

"Well," he said coolly, "what of it?"

Welter, Sr., cleared his throat with some little difficulty, while Blair smiled maliciously.

"Ahem! The fact is, Harry," returned Mr. Welter, carefully avoiding Harry's steady gaze, "I am, as you know, a poor man, with Blair here to educate and provide for. You have—a—no legal claim on the estate, and so I—I am very sorry to—to say you are——"

"Homeless and penniless, eh?" suggested Harry bitterly. "Well, it's no more than I might have expected from you. I suppose I can sleep in my old room one more night?"

"Oh, cer—tainly, cer—tainly, Harry," Mr. Welter responded, with an air of relief; and he rubbed his hands together as though washing them free of any further responsibility connected with Harry Darrel. Then he began:

"If—a—five or even ten dollars——"

"I don't ask any favors," curtly interrupted

Harry, turning on his heel. "Come Don, we will go."

"Don stays! Here, Don!" angrily called Blair. But the collie had not the slightest idea of obeying. He stalked gravely on ahead of Harry up the wide, old-fashioned hall stair-way.

"Don't trouble yourself, Blair," Harry called from the upper corridor. "Don happens to be my property—not yours. And if you so much as lay a finger on him," he added, letting his temper for the moment get the better of his discretion, "I'll—"

The slam of the office door below fortunately cut short Harry's threat, which after all was nothing very terrific. His nature was anything but revengeful. A sound thrashing—such an one as any two-legged brute who willfully abuses a four-legged one deserves—would have been his utmost limit.

Setting the hand-lamp he had brought from the hall on the pine bureau, Harry looked about the well-remembered room.

It was one of those low-studded, half-wainscoted interiors peculiar to the few old-time mansions still left standing in New England. Nothing had apparently been disturbed, excepting a few layers of dust, since he left it more than two years previous. Even the "chunks" of drift-wood with dry kindlings beneath lay in readiness in the old-time fire-place.

More for the sake of its company than warmth, Harry started a blaze. Don stretched himself on the hearth-stone with a great sigh of content. Harry drew a cumbersome chair to a convenient distance from the fire and dropped into it, then drifted into a reverie in which past, present and future had their several parts.

CHAPTER II.

HARRY BECOMES ACQUAINTED WITH DANIEL PLUNKET.

In TELLING me of it afterward, Harry asserts that he was not asleep—only in a sort of waking drowse.

This, then, must have been the reason that as he sat staring into the fire Harry raised his eyes only to see Mr. Caleb Welter, who naturally had been occupying quite a share of his thoughts, standing before him.

Not, of course, in the flesh; yet there was nothing particularly ghost-like or spiritual in his appearance. His hands were clasped together at the back of his shiny suit of well-worn black, as Harry had so often seen him in life; and the tip of his sharp nose, even, was as red as ever.

Yet, as he seemed to bend his hard gray eyes upon Harry, the latter felt—or thought he did—an involuntary shudder run through his frame, though all Caleb—or his counterfeit presentment—did was to unclasp his hands from behind him and point stiffly at a dingy oil-painting hanging above the wooden mantel. Then he seemed to fade imperceptibly away, and Harry cherished a vague fancy that Mr.

Caleb Welter had vanished up the wide-mouthed chimney.

Be this as it may, when Harry began rubbing his eyes a bit the fire was dancing and crackling on the hearth, but Caleb Welter or his shadowy representative was non est.

Then, very naturally, Harry, after studying drowsily over the curious phenomenon, looked up at the dingy oil-painting.

It represented the brig Newton, Captain Corydon Darrel, lying to in a gale; and this was the vessel in which Harry's father had gone down with all on board.

Harry had no foolish superstitions of his own, yet he could not help thinking of what he had seen, or dreamed. Thinking naturally led to conjecturing; and, half-vaguely, Harry wondered if there really was "anything in it."

"Perhaps it means that I must follow the sea, as father did; but I suppose I shall have to do that anyhow," was his final thought before drifting from a drowse across the border-land of sleep. For though Harry was, in a sense, fond of sea-faring matters, he knew that in these days of maritime decadence it was a precarious profession at best; but Mr. Caleb Welter had made the decision for him, and Harry could see no other way open by which to earn a livelihood.

It was early day-dawn when Harry, rousing him-

self from uneasy slumber in the big arm-chair, shook himself into wakefulness.

By degrees he began to recall what had passed since reaching Wayback on foot from the nearest railway station. He had made his way to the old homestead and learned the unexpected as well as unwelcome news of the evening before.

Then the curious dream or vision, whichever it was, recurred to his mind; and, putting the two things together, Harry came to a resolve.

"Come, Don," he said, "this house is no home for you and I any longer. We'll strike out toward Barmouth, to begin with, and see what is in store for us there;" for Barmouth was the port from which Harry's father had sailed in the brig Newton. So, unconsciously or otherwise, Harry might have been influenced by his dream, if such you may call it.

Don joyfully obeyed. With eager eyes he stood watching Harry as he packed a battered grip-sack with a few necessaries. Then the two stole softly down-stairs and out the front door into the pure morning air.

Harry looked back, half wistfully, at the old homestead—the only home he had ever known; after which he left the main street, which was completely deserted at such an early hour, and struck into the thoroughfare leading to Barmouth.

Four dollars and twenty cents, an indifferent wardrobe in a shabby "grip," together with Don,

the collie, represented Harry's entire worldly possessions; and though the average hero of fiction is generally represented as light-hearted under similar trying circumstances, Harry has since acknowledged that he felt very differently.

But Don was light-hearted enough for two. Rejoicing in his unwonted freedom no less than the companionship of the master from whom he had so long been separated, the collie dashed hither and thither in a perfect abandon of delight, as the two trudged briskly on toward Barmouth, twenty miles away.

Plunging madly into a thicket by the road-side, in one of these ecstatic onsets, Don began barking vociferously at something or some one he had discovered.

That it was the latter, was manifested an instant later.

"Durn it all, git out-git out, I say!"

The voice, not unmarked by alarm, was followed by its owner, a tall, raw-boned young fellow in country dress, with light hair and a shrewd, goodnatured face.

It would seem that the stranger had been disturbed in the act of eating, for in one hand was a robust section of bologna sausage, while the other clutched the end of a baker's loaf.

"Here, Don!" called Harry; and the collie, who, with eager eyes fixed upon the food, was barking boisterously, dropped obediently to the rear.

"Don smelt the sausage," laughed Harry, with an involuntary glance in the direction of the delicacy named, for his walk had sharpened an always healthy appetite.

"Maybe 'twas that," said the new-comer, appearing considerably relieved; "but I'm dre'tful afraid of hyderphoby, and your dog come a-peltin' in on me so sudden I was kinder startled. I——"

Here the lanky stranger stopped short and stared very hard at Harry's nautical rig, which he seemed to notice for the first time.

"Why—you're a sailor, ain't you?" he exclaimed, with a curious look of interest.

"A sort of one. All the fellows aboard the St. Mary school-ship, where I've been for a year past, dress this way, though."

"Come on and have some breakfas' along of me," said his odd acquaintance, eagerly. "I'm dre'tful glad I've run across you. My name's Plunket—Dan'l Plunket."

Briefly mentioning his own, Harry, nothing loth, accepted the cordial invitation. Following the eager Daniel into a spruce-growth at the road-side, Harry was soon discussing bread and sausage with hearty relish, not forgetting his four-footed companion as he did so.

"I come from Win'sor county, up 'n Vermont," remarked young Mr. Plunket in the intervals of mastication, "and you're the fust one I've met to

have any talk with. What port might you be bound to, if 'tain' no offense, my hearty?"

Harry told him.

"I'm a-layin' my course in the same direction; s'pose we cruise in comp'ny?"

Carefully suppressing a smile at the very marked contrast between Daniel's countryfied appearance and his nautical phraseology, Harry cheerfully acquiesced. The remains of the repast were given to Don. Then, shouldering a battered valise by a stick thrust through the handles, Daniel stepped lightly out in company with his new companion.

It was evident that young Mr. Plunket had an inquiring mind. No sooner were the two fairly under way than he began:

- "I s'pose your folks was willin' for you to go to sea?"
- "I have no father or mother," was the half-sad reply. "My mother died when I was born. Father sailed for Mr. Caleb Welter when he was a shipowner in Barmouth years ago. After my father was lost in the Newton, there was no one who belonged to me living. For some reason—I never knew what—Mr. Welter took me to live with him in Wayback, for he failed in business and had to go back to the old homestead."
- "Sho? you don't say! Was his folks good to you?"
 - "Mr. Caleb Welter was a single man. He owned

the old homestead, though his brother, Jabez Welter, a widower with one son, always lived there with us. The housekeeper, Mrs. Starch, was kind in her way."

"Well?" ejaculated Daniel, deeply interested.

"I graduated from the St. Mary school-ship a week ago and came to Wayback last night. Mr. Caleb had died very suddenly of heart disease. There was no will, so everything went to his brother Jabez. Don and I found our room was better than our company, so we left early this morning.".

"And do you mean ter say you was turned outer house'n home like that?" demanded Daniel, energetically.

"Something very much like it," was the quiet reply.

"Then mark my words, there's some durn jugglery about you not bein' left nothin'," Daniel observed.

But Harry thought differently. In fiction such things are common enough, while in fact the Probate Office and its machinery stand in the way of open cheating and fraud. He felt that Mr. Caleb Welter would not have left him entirely unprovided for had his death not been so sudden.

CHAPTER III.

HARRY AND HIS NEW FRIEND REACH BARMOUTH.

DANIEL'S own story was of the simplest. All his life had been passed on the little sterile farm far up among the hills of Vermont. He had never been ten miles from home before. Three days previous, Daniel had taken his first ride in the cars. "And durned if ever I was so scar't in all my born days, though I never let on to no one," he frankly acknowledged. For economy's sake Daniel was making the last of his journey on foot, and before long he and Harry were talking together as freely as though they had always been acquainted.

Under Daniel's seeming uncouthness and verdant demeanor was a sound substratum of shrewdness and common sense, though this latter quality Harry was at first inclined to doubt when Daniel made known his purpose in leaving home, for it was not so much to see the world as to go to sea. Daniel's mind was full of the highly-colored pictures of sea-life as drawn in the few cheap "nautical" novels he had read by stealth; and finding that his own statements as to the actualities of ship-duty were in vain, Harry desisted.

About half-way on the journey a friendly farmer invited them to ride on the top of a big load of wheat straw, and stretched at ease on the yielding substance, the two began to take what Daniel denominated "solid comfort."

Well, it was one of those charming days in May when the mere sense of living is delightful. The highway itself was an old stage-road that since the advent of the local railway had been given over to casual travel.

Tall pines and hemlocks on either side alternated with groves of beech and oak, and the stillness was only broken by the regular footfalls of the two heavy horses and the occasional scream of a faraway locomotive.

Once, to Daniel's astonishment and half dismay, a bicyclist swept past and disappeared as quickly in the dust and distance.

- "Jeems Rice! What runs that thing? Is it 'lectricity or steam?" And Daniel's light eyes fairly bulged from their sockets as he stared after the ongoing rider.
- "A bicycle. Didn't you ever see one before?" was Harry's amused reply.
- "I never see nothin', so to speak," slowly returned Daniel; "not even a circus or a county fair. The folks is poor, and I've never had chances like other fellers."
 - "You'll have the more to tell them when you

get back to the farm," Harry cheerfully returned, with an inward resolve to stick by his new companion, and so far as possible to "help him over the rough places;" for Harry's monotonous work-a-day life had stood in the way of boyish friendships with those near his own age, and he had never formed any strong intimacies among the rollicking, goodnatured boys of the St. Mary school-ship. Yet, somehow, he felt drawn toward his new companion, whom he intuitively felt was a species of country diamond in the rough.

In addition to the latter's shrewd common sense, which showed itself now and then in speech, was a certain honesty of purpose and expression of desire to do right rather uncommon in these degenerate days of cigarette-smoking youth.

"The Plunkets has always been honest, Godfearin' folks, if I do say it," remarked Daniel, in one of his confidences, "and I ain't goin' to be the fust to go crookid. I promised the folks I'd never learn to drink, swear, or use terbacker, and Dan'l never goes back on his word."

And so, while the team rumbled on toward their destination, the two young fellows whose life-threads were destined for a time to be so curiously interwoven laid their plans and indulged in the fanciful castle-building peculiar to young fellows who literally have the world before them.

As the sturdy horses began toiling up the final

slope, a far-away continuous moaning, mingled with the soughing of the breeze through the tall pines by the wayside, began to make itself heard.

"What's that, eh, Harry?"

"Wait till we reach the top of the hill; I'll show you," was his new friend's reply.

On the summit of the long, uprising slope between Barmouth and the outside world the panting horses were pulled up.

As far as the eye could reach stretched the blue expanse of the ocean, with a score of green islands lying barrier-like between its waters and those of the land-locked harbor which bordered the little sea-board city at their feet.

Against the windward sides of the islands themselves fretted the white surf, whose far-off voice, never silent in the calmest days, had excited Daniel's wondering question.

Now, Daniel had never in all his life seen a larger body of water than the little pond near the farm, and his pent-up astonishment at the eight before him was for the moment too great for immediate speech, till it vented itself in one sudden homely ejaculation:

"By gosh!"

And now the wagon rolled down the wide thoroughfare on the opposite slope, bordered on either hand by handsome grounds and private residences. Entering the main business street, it was stopped at a large rear stable, where the straw was to be delivered.

Thanking the kindly driver for their ride, our two friends made their way to a seat under some noble elms in the little central mall, or park, around which the tide of busy traffic continually circled and eddied.

The perpetual rattle of wheels over the paving, the stream of passing pedestrians, together with the various sights and sounds peculiar even to a small city, were all new and strange to Daniel, fresh from his country home.

"I vum!" he exclaimed, drawing a long breath; "Barmouth must be nigh as big as New York——"

Here Daniel stopped abruptly to stare at a hansom which had that moment stopped at the entrance to the mall near where they were sitting.

"Wal," he said, wonderingly, "if that ain't the queerest-lookin' two-wheeled shay ever I see."

"That's a hansom," responded his amused companion.

"Nothin' hansum about it in my way of thinkin'. Look's though the feller atop on the hind perch there might tilter the hoss off his feet."

A sharp voice proceeding from the occupant of the vehicle, who had called to a passing pedestrian, reached their ears, preventing Harry's reply.

"Has Marlock brought the Nixie in from the Island, Brown, do you know?"

"Yes, Doctor; at least I saw your little yacht lying at the wharf-end last evening."

"See anything of Marlock himself?"

"I met him fighting drunk later on in the evening. He'll lose the Nixie for you some of these fine days—mark my words."

"He won't have the chance," was the curt rejoinder. "I'm going to bounce him this very day. I've put up with Marlock too long as it is."

"That's what every one in Barmouth thinks," returned his friend, bluntly, "and it's said he openly boasts that you don't dare turn him off on account of something he knows——"

Here Mr. Brown pulled himself up short, perhaps thinking he had said too much. Possibly he had, for Doctor Gregg's sharp features flushed visibly. Then he seemed to turn pale, as both the listeners noticed from where they sat. But he recovered himself at once.

"We shall see what I do or don't dare," he said, briefly. "The most I care for is the bother I've always had to find a person competent to run the yacht and the Island both."

"You'll have to follow out the old rhyme over the fire-place in the stone house, for what I see," laughed the other. "How does it run—"

> Keep Gregg Island or it sell, Fortune with thee will not dwell; Give this Island out of hand, Fortune win at thy command.

"Do you know I half believe that rigmarole?" said the Doctor, shrugging his shoulders. "Anyway, I'm seriously thinking of trying the experiment. The Gregg fortune has been on the wane long enough, heaven knows," he added, rather bitterly.

"It's cost the different generations too much time and money hunting for your freebooting ancestor's gold supposed to be hidden on the Island," responded Mr. Brown, who was evidently nothing if not plainspoken.

The Doctor frowned, nodded briefly, and signaling his driver to go on, the hansom rattled out of sight.

Only a sort of languid curiosity had induced Harry and his new friend to listen to the foregoing conversation, which they little dreamed had an important bearing on both their futures.

Indeed, their own personal matters were of far more importance just then.

"How much money you got, if it's a fair question, Harry?"

"Four dollars, twenty. That, with my grip-sack and Don, here, comprises my worldly possessions."

Harry tried to speak lightly, but, truth to tell, he was beginning to feel a trifle down-hearted. He had seen from the hill-top that the anchored vessels in the harbor were for the most part coasters or fishermen, and neither he nor Daniel cared to go coasting or fishing.

Then, again, it occurred to him for the first time that even should they get a chance, Don could not accompany them on shipboard.

"Four twenty, with five fifty I've got, is nine seventy," said Daniel, breaking in on his friend's reflections; "for, as we're goin' to be chums, what's mine's yours, and visy versy, as the school-book says. Well, come on now, and we'll hunt up some kind of a cheap stoppin'-place fust of all."

CHAPTER IV.

HARRY MEETS DOCTOR GREGG.

SINCE the decay of ship-building and ship-owning, Barmouth's principal maritime interests have been confined to fishing, coasting, and some transient West India trade.

Occasionally a large ship or bark, formerly built in the Barmouth yards, came in for repairs, or a brig loaded with salt for the fishermen dropped anchor in the harbor. But as our three friends neared the foot of the long business street, which sloped gently to the city wharves, they saw, as I have said, that the harbor was tenanted by only the smaller fore-and-aft schooners.

They were about turning into one of the humbler streets in their search for cheap lodgings when an outcry from the direction they had come arrested their attention.

There was a distant clamor of excited voices, above which arose the rapid clatter of hoof-beats. Through a cloud of dust appeared a horse coming at full speed, the vehicle to which he was attached bounding from side to side in its rapid career.

"It's one of them runaway teams with a young

woman, jest as I've read of in books about the city!" gasped Daniel, in a high state of excitement.

From store and shop and warehouse rush bareheaded men and boys.

"Hoss runnin' away! Whoa! whoa! Stop him, some one!" with all the rest of the senseless yells and cries which serve to increase rather than to check the speed of the frightened equine.

Stop him? As well attempt to stop a locomotive under a full head of steam with no one at the throttle.

But in his frenzied excitement Daniel, with a vision of rescuing some beautiful maiden from a terrible fate, thought of none of these things. As the horse came thundering down the street, followed by a yelling crowd, Daniel with a wild whoop made a spring for the bridle. A shout, a shock, and Daniel's shoe-soles were elevated skyward as he rolled in the dust, and the terrified steed dashed frantically onward straight for the wharf, not twenty feet away.

"It's the Doctor's hansom," said Harry aloud, catching a momentary glimpse of the Doctor's sharp pale face and tightly-compressed lips as the horse tore by.

Dropping his grip-sack, Harry, who was a capital amateur sprinter, sped after the vehicle, with Don at his heels.

He had no definite idea further than that the

nearness of the water might check the flight of the runaway, so that he could perhaps arrive in time to prevent the sudden overturning of the hansom.

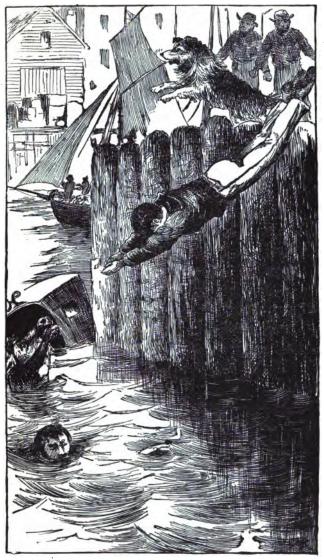
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A shout of applause went up from the excited throng on the wharf; for as Doctor Gregg, dazed and half-stunned by the sudden shock, seemed incapable of extricating himself, Harry seized him by the hair and pulled him to the surface.

"Oh! Let go my hair, confound you!" sputtered Doctor Gregg the moment he got his breath. "What in thunder do you think you're doing?"

"Trying to prevent you from drowning," said Harry sharply. "Now, then, put one hand on each shoulder—so. I can keep you afloat till the boat they're putting off gets here, if you'll do as I tell you."

That Doctor Gregg was evidently not accustomed to being thus addressed was plain from his wrathful



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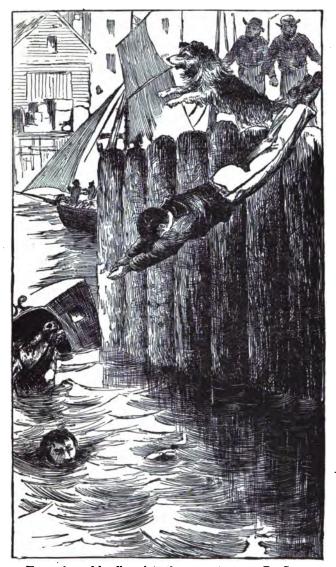
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glare. But the situation did not admit of any further explosion on the Doctor's part, so for a wonder he obeyed without further words.

Keeping his chest inflated and head thrown well back, Harry struck out gently with hands and feet. Don, obedient to a signal from his master, seizing the horse's bridle-rein in his teeth, was trying his best to hold the animal's head above water.

A moment later two dories manned by sturdy fishermen pushed away from the wharf. The occupants of one cut the struggling horse loose from the hansom, while the others dragged Doctor Gregg and his rescuer over their boat's gunwale, unmindful of the former's sputterings at their lack of ceremony.

A rousing cheer went up from the crowd on the wharf as Don, without letting go his hold of the bridle, swam with the horse to the steamboat "slip," where they were quickly assisted to terra firma.

"Thunder!" exclaimed Doctor Gregg irritably, as he rubbed the salt water from his eyes. "I can't face that noisy gang in this plight!"

"We'll dhrap ye over ag'in if ye say so, Docther!" observed one of the men, winking at his fellows, for Doctor Gregg and his peculiarities were known far and near.

"Dare say," was the crusty response. "Here—put us both aboard the Nixie, Donovan. I've got some old yachting-duds in the cabin that will do for a change. If that driver of mine who jumped off

when the horse bolted don't show up, see the horse sent to the stable and get some one to fish up the hansom. I'll make it all right."

"Very good, sir," was the reply, and in another moment the two had scrambled aboard a trim-looking cutter-yacht of some fifteen tons burden.

Not a single word as yet had the Doctor addressed to Harry, who, rather amused at the other's oddities, stood waiting his pleasure.

"Marlock! Cap'n Marlock! Are you below there?"

Stamping impatiently on the deck, Doctor Gregg bellowed thus down the little companion-way; and without even waiting a response he beckoned Harry, who descended after him into the little cabin, which at first seemed deserted.

"Marlock! Where the dickens is the drunken scoundrel!"

"Who you calling drunk?" exclaimed some one in surly tones; and with the words a heavily-bearded man of almost herculean build rolled out of one of the curtained berths to the cushioned locker, where he sat for a moment blinking at the drenched newcomers in half-tipsy astonishment.

"Halloo, Doc! Been overboard?"

Without replying to the coarse familiarity the Doctor glanced from the speaker to a half-emptied gin-bottle on the locker beside him:

"Go forward, and take your clothes-bag and your-

self ashore! Never show your face aboard the Nixie again! Carry what belongs to you—nothing else, remember—away from the Island this week. No talk! You know me!"

"Yes, I know you—better than most Barmouth folks, perhaps. And I can tell something, too. Ah, no! Doctor Gregg—you don't get rid of me so easy as all that!"

But despite the coarse bravado, Harry saw that Marlock's eyes shifted uneasily under the Doctor's wrathful glare.

"You—you—saturated specimen of alcoholism, get out of this!" thundered Doctor Gregg.

And to Harry's dismay the Doctor, grasping Marlock by the throat, threw him heavily to the cabin floor.

- "Now do you understand that I'm in earnest?" panted the Doctor, whose face was quite livid with anger.
- "Yes, I understand now," was the cowed response. "Mark my words, though," sullenly added Marlock; "this'll be a sorry day's work for you, Doctor Gregg!"
- "Go!" shortly commanded the Doctor, evidently a little ashamed of his ebullition of anger. And as Marlock obeyed, Harry saw that he walked with a limp.
- "That job's done!" said the Doctor, drawing a long breath. "Now for some dry clothes for us both."

These were soon forthcoming from one of the lockers.

"Hah!" ejaculated Doctor Gregg, vigorously scrubbing his wiry gray hair. "That's something like. Now then, young man, who are you?"

"Harry Darrel, late of the St. Mary school-ship, at your service," was the demure reply.

Doctor Gregg wheeled sharply round and stared very hard in Harry's good-looking face.

"Bless my heart! You don't mean to say you're a son of Corry Darrel—Captain Corydon, who was lost in the brig Newton years ago?"

"Yes, sir. Did you know my father?"

"I did., A squarer man never trod a quarter-deck ——"

The Doctor's further remarks were prevented by the sound of hurried footsteps on deck, followed by an anxious voice calling through the companion-way:

"Harry, where be you? Down stairs?"

"It's a friend of mine," said Harry, answering the Doctor's inquiring glance—"two of them, in fact." For he heard Don whining uneasily at the companion-way.

In another moment Daniel, very dusty and disheveled, appeared, followed by Don, dripping water at every step.

"Turn that dog out! I don't like dogs—wet ones especially!" said the Doctor sharply.

"Considerin' his wettin' come from helpin' save

your three-hundred-dollar hoss from drownin', I sh'd think you might stan' it for once."

"Daniel's coolness, no less than the easy confidence with which he returned the Doctor's astonished stare, had its due effect.

"Hum! that alters the case. Your dog, or young Darrel's?"

"His," was the laconic reply. "I've brought both 'grips' aboard, Harry," he went on; "so whenever you're ready we'll start out. There's a place up on Bay Street I've heard of where beds is twenty-five cents a night, and grub cheap accordin', too."

Doctor Gregg, who had been impatiently shuffling his feet during all this, now came to the fore, thus to speak. His first act was to throw open the notecase he had taken from his drenched clothing and extract a wad of wet bills.

"Now look here, er—Darrel," he began abruptly, "I don't value my life overmuch, but there's a little girl at home (and his voice grew suddenly tender) who would have cried her pretty eyes out if anything had happened to her crusty old dad. I want to give you——"

"Not money, Doctor, please," firmly interrupted Harry, putting away with his hand the pulpy wad Doctor Gregg had extended; "I'd rather not. It's too much like being paid for doing one's duty."

"Not money!" sharply echoed Doctor Gregg. "Well what do you want?"

Before Harry could utter the somewhat indignant protest that arose to his lips the irrepressible Daniel "put in his oar," as he afterward observed.

"Tell you, Doctor," he said, with a shrewd twinkle in his honest eyes. "Seein' you're so set on makin' Harry a present, you might give him that Island of your'n I've heard tell of."

"Dan," impetuously exclaimed Harry, "you're taking too much on yourself."

But Daniel was not abashed in the least.

"Oh, well, you needn't get mad, Harry," he returned, with a good-natured grin. "I spoke as much for the Doctor's int'rest as your'n"—a remark which Harry did not understand till later.

"If you were a ship-owner, now, instead of a doctor," interposed Harry, with a half-smile, "I'd ask you to give me a mate's berth in one of your smaller vessels, as I'm intending to follow the sea for a time, at least."

"Me, too," interrupted Daniel, who could not bear to be long silent.

"Eh! By Jove! Yes!" ejaculated Doctor Gregg, as if in answer to some sudden thought suggested by Harry's remark. "Why, I am a—a vessel owner!—the Nixie, here. I'll give you Marlock's place at forty dollars a month, and 'Daniel,' as you call him, can go as spare hand. What do you say?"

The suddenness of the proposition quite took away Harry's breath. To have sole charge of a

jaunty little yacht was a hundred times better than a berth on shipboard these days.

"Say 'Yes' before he goes back on his offer, Harry," whispered Daniel audibly. It was evident that he favored the idea.

"Of course he'll say 'Yes,'" briskly put in the Doctor; "fool if he don't. I must be off now, but I'll send Matt right aboard—he's fixing up a hammock for my little girl at home. Matt will tell you all you want to know. He's been cook, steward and crew ever since I owned the Nixie—cleverest old Maltese sailor you ever saw. Make yourselves at home till he comes. I'll explain everything to him. See you later. Good-by!"

"But, Doctor," feebly expostulated Harry as the former bolted up the companion-way steps, "I'm not sure——"

"I am—that's enough!" was the sharp response, and the Doctor vanished.

CHAPTER V.

HARRY AND DAN VISIT GREGG ISLAND.

DANIEL gave vent to his pent-up feelings by an ecstatic shout.

"If this ain't a streak of luck I lose my guess!" he exclaimed, rubbing his big hands together as he looked around the cozy interior.

Harry said nothing. The whole thing had come about so unexpectedly that he could not find words for the moment, and he, too, began gazing at his new surroundings, for he had been aboard our small skimming-dish center-board yachts as a matter of course. But the Nixie was very different both in rig and hull, being the new American type of the English cutter. Her extreme depth and a ton's weight of metal bolted to the keel did away with the ordinary amount of ballast, in the first place. This left abundant standing-room below—an important requisite in a small yacht.

The little after-cabin was separated by a portiere from a midship compartment where eating and cooking was done. Here was the miniature range, the "pantry," and mate's berth. In the bow the stores and sundries were kept.

The little cabin itself contained two handsomelycurtained berths, cushioned lockers, convenient "cuddy-holes" for the storage of small articles, a swinging lamp, and a marine clock. Overhead in the raised skylight were boxes of flowering plants. There was a tiny lavatory, and, indeed, every possible convenience that could be expected in such limited quarters.

Limited or not, the most luxurious ship's-cabin never looked half so inviting to a newly appointed commander as did the Nixie's in the pleased eyes of Harry Darrel, who had mentally decided to accept Doctor Gregg's proposition.

As for Daniel, he was in mild raptures. To his simple ideas, the fittings were an embodiment of perfect luxury.

"I've read of sech cabins but I never dre'mp of livin' in one," he said in almost awe-struck tones. "For you will take up with the Doctor's offer?" he added imploringly.

"I suppose I will have to," laughed Harry; "but I thought nothing less than a ship bound round the world would satisfy your ambition, Daniel."

"The Nixie's big enough to begin with; and I guess livin' in a yacht's cabin is better'n a ship's fo'c'sle," was Daniel's philosophical response.

Well, it was not long before Daniel, who, like most country boys, was "handy about the house," had a fire started in the little range and the wet clothing hung up to dry. The "grips" were brought below, where their contents were consigned to the respective lockers below each berth, after which Harry and Daniel went on deck to see how things looked there.

Everything was in ship-shape order. Mast and booms were scraped and oiled till they shone. The deck was as clean as a newly-waxed ball-room floor. The paint had been recently scrubbed, and the brass-work was polished to dazzling brilliancy. Every bit of gear was coiled neatly on the copper pins, halyards were set taut, and spare-lines Flemish-coiled in place.

As they stood looking at all this with pleased interest, a tall, vigorous-looking sailor swung himself lightly aboard by a stay.

Glancing quickly from one to the other, he gravely touched his cap to Harry in true man-o'-war style, much to the latter's confusion.

"Hope you like look of everythings, Cap'n Darrel," he said in a pleasant voice, marked by a peculiar foreign accent. Then, with a smile that showed a set of even, white teeth, he added:

"I Mateo—Matt, they calls me. Doctor Gregg tells me all 'bout you bot'. Ter'ble glad that Marlock discharge. Too much drunk to run this boat."

"But, Mateo," said Harry, coloring, "you mustn't call me 'Cap'n Darrel.' I'm only a boy."

"Doctor's orders," was the grave reply. "Always mind him, else he bounce me all same as Mar-

lock." And "Cap'n Darrel" it was, with Mateo, ever after, despite Harry's frequent remonstrances.

In a very short time Mateo prepared an appetizing meal, to which ample justice was done by two hungry young fellows with the healthiest of appetites. Don came in for a share later on. Then the three adjourned to the deck, where they were shortly joined by Mateo.

Some stores for the Island had been left on the pierend, and these were soon taken aboard. Then the mainsail was hoisted and the fasts let go. As the cutter swung slowly away the jibs were run up and her head pointed in the direction of Barmouth light.

"Now, Cap'n, you take the wheel," said Mateo.
"I stand near you—show you 'bout channel buoys, and how you lay proper course for the Island."

Well, the wind was quartering and strong enough to show the Nixie's sailing qualities to excellent advantage. Heeling over never so slightly, she flew past anchored vessels and smaller sailing-craft—past buoys red, white and black—like a bird.

Daniel was delighted beyond all power of speech. With Don at his side he sat at the weather-rail hanging to his cap, and gazing in pleased astonishment at the novel sights on every hand.

A Boston steamer crowded with passengers, coming in through the ship-channel, saluted the Nixie with three hoarse "toots"—presumably in honor of Doctor Gregg, who was a friend of the Cambridge's captain.

A sharp-nosed Glo'ster fisherman, carrying every rag of drawing-sail, was trying titles with a hand-some schooner-yacht, which proved to be the still-famous America. A puffing tugboat steamed slowly up the harbor with a deep-loaded brig laden with salt in tow; dories and "cat"-boats innumerable added variety to the scene.

Harry, who had a memory both quick and retentive, readily followed Mateo's instructions. Indeed, so easy of access and egress is Barmouth Harbor that the courses and distances are easily learned.

Out past Barmouth Point, with its towering light, and before them lay the open sea, with Gregg Island standing apart by itself some six miles distant from the main-land.

Absorbed in his steering, Harry had thus far had no chance to ask the score or more of questions about Gregg Island that occurred to him; nor did Mateo volunteer any particular information on his own part. Indeed, what little he did say was shadowed by a sort of half-reserve which struck Harry as being somewhat peculiar.

A reserve, or rather reticence, began to be noticeable on Daniel's part after passing Barmouth Point. Occasionally he sighed heavily and cast longing glances astern, in the direction of distant Barmouth.

"Homesick, Dan?" gayly asked Harry, who felt completely in—or on—his native element.

"No," replied Daniel, with a feeble smile, 'taint exac'ly homesickness. I——"

But here Daniel turned suddenly pale. Uttering a hollow groan he stumbled to leeward, where in two seconds he was "whooping" wildly in all the agony of his first experience of sea-sickness.

"It is sad, but true, that the seasick man gets little sympathy from those who have themselves finally overcome the malady; and though Daniel entreated to be "throwed overboard," as he lay limply on the deck, Mateo only laughed.

Harry was too much taken up with the Island the yacht was rapidly nearing to give particular heed to his friend's distress, which he knew would cease when they were in calm water again; for, unlike those forming the barrier between Barmouth Harbor and the ocean, Gregg Island was of considerable extent, well wooded on the north and quite precipitous at its southern extremity.

The side on which they were approaching it sloped gently down to a tiny circular cove, the entrance to which was so narrow that when, twenty minutes later, Mateo took the wheel to steer the Nixie into her mooring, the end of the main-boom almost touched the high ledges on either hand.

Down went the wheel, and as the jibs had been taken in a little before, the Nixie rounded cleverly to alongside an anchored spar buoy with a big hemp noose in one end, to which the yacht was made fast without the trouble of anchoring.

Daniel, looking very bilious and flabby, roused up

sufficiently to help in stowing the mainsail, after which he began to rub his eyes in great amazement at the scene before him.

And no wonder. Speaking from personal knowledge, I regard Gregg Island, as I have chosen to call it for obvious reasons, as one of the most picturesque for its size on the New England coast.

The little cove itself was bowl-shaped excepting opposite the entrance, where a sort of break, if I may so express it, in the side widened gradually back to the base of a rocky promontory some hundred feet in height.

Nestling under the brow of the eminence was a quaint-looking low-roofed house of one story only, with straggling out-buildings on either hand.

"There you' house, Cap'n," said Mateo, pointing to it as the trio, accompanied by Don, paddled ashore in the yacht's tender.

"Doctor Gregg's house, you mean," laughed Harry; but Mateo only shook his head and smiled.

There was no time to ask the meaning of the smile, for the boat had reached a small pier extending into the cove. All hands scrambled out. Mateo remained behind to secure the boat, while our two friends, accompanied by Don, made their way up toward the picturesque little dwelling.

"Beats Robinson Crusoe's Island all holler!" was Dan's enthusiastic verdict. And perhaps in some respects it did.

CHAPTER VI.

THE NEW HOME ON GREGG ISLAND.

A NEARER approach showed that the house was built of irregular blocks of stone, quarried from the Island ledges, firmly cemented together. The chimney was of similar construction. The window-panes were small, and of a thick green glass used in the last century. Over the heavy oak door was rudely chiseled "B. G., 1701."

On either side of this old-time dwelling stood an orchard of gnarled apple-trees which, though planted nearly a century before, were loaded with fragrant blossoms. Farther away was a well-planned-out vegetable garden.

Mateo came hurrying up, and, unlocking the door, which they saw was made of planking from a vessel's bottom, threw it open with quite a flourish.

"Entrez, Messieurs," he said, unconsciously lapsing into one of some half-dozen languages picked up in various parts of the globe.

The room in which they found themselves was different from any I have ever seen in my vagabond wanderings; for, in the first place, it was very low-studded, and ceiled to the exposed beams with pan-

elings of different woods, quite black with age, that Harry's eye assured him had come from the cabins and state-rooms of at least a dozen ships—probably, of various nationalities, to judge by the quaint carving and tarnished gilding.

The cumbrous oak and mahogany furniture, such as it was, told a similar story. So with the quaint swinging lamp, the noisy marine clock, the dingy oil-paintings, and a score of similar articles.

A wide-mouthed stone fire-place at the back extended itself up through the roof as a chimney. Graven on the center-piece was the verse Harry and his friend had heard of. This the former read aloud:

Keep Gregg Island Or it Sell, Fortune Never wyth Thee dwel. Gyve Thys Island Out of Hand, Fortune Comes at Thy Comand.

To deviate a little from the thread of my story, let me make a brief explanation.

Nearly two centuries before, "Kydd's Island," as called in the earlier charts, was a sort of headquarters for that famous freebooter. The stone dwelling was erected. A home-bound East Indiaman, plundered and run ashore by the pirates, furnished the interior fittings. After Kydd's subsequent capture his sailing-master, Antony Gregg, took possession of the Island. At his death, twenty years later, he bequeathed it to Beniah Gregg, his only brother, whom he cordially hated. "There is enough Tray-

sure here conceled to buy your Little town of New Amsterdam, if you can fynd it," was the most important clause in the malicious old freebooter's will, which Doctor Gregg still has among his family papers.

Inflamed by a desire of gain, Beniah Gregg sold his New Amsterdam estate (in the very heart of present-day New York) and moved his family to the Island, giving his time and money in vain excavation and blasting for the hidden treasure. And so with successive generations of the Gregg family down to the Doctor himself, who for some years neglected his practice and wasted his substance in like manner.

"But bime-by," said Mateo, who at much greater length than I have taken had related all this to his two interested listeners, "bime-by Doctor get discourage. He sink much money all for notings. Then he try sheep-raising. No good, somehow. Maybe Marlock not know how to manage—more likely not care. Nobody want the Island to buy—it all dead loss to Doctor Gregg. So he——"

Pausing, Mateo drew a legal-looking document from the inside of his shirt, which he extended to Harry.

"So he to-day make you, Cap'n Darrel, little present of Gregg Island. This the deed his lawyer write and I witness. Letter inside say all rest."

In a state of bewilderment too great for speech Harry opened the letter itself. It read thus:

My Dear Boy:—If you will accept Gregg Island "in full of all demands," I will esteem it a favor to have you take it off my hands. Matt will explain the situation to you; and I am just superstitious enough to cherish a vain fancy that thus to "Gyve Thys Island Out of Hand" may have some bearing on my future fortunes, which just now are at a low ebb. Do not refuse this possible "white elephant." My little girl, who before very long will thank you personally for saving her crusty old dad's life, joins most heartily in this—not wish, but entreaty.

Anthony Gregg, M. D.

"But—why—I can't accept such a gift!" began Harry in a troubled voice as Daniel, who had vented his feelings in a long whistle, was about speaking. "It is—is impossible!"

"Doctor be awful disappoint' suppose you say no," was Mateo's grave reply. "Never see him set his mind on not'ing so much. 'I feel almost sure, Matt, it bring me back good luck if he will.' So he say to me."

Daniel added his own arguments in favor of Harry's acceptance, and after a long talk Harry reluctantly consented—not without certain mental reservations. And he had an idea, besides, that not being of age the deed of gift was not legally binding, so that at any time he could relinquish his claim; but of this he did not speak.

•;

Well, for a summer habitation Gregg Island offered many attractions to a person content with a quiet, apart-from-the-world existence.

There were fish for the catching and sea ducks for the shooting. The "farm garden," as Mateo called it, produced vegetables in abundance. some early period the Island had been the breedingplace of countless sea-birds, and the soil itself was almost equal to a patent fertilizer. Moreover, an erratic current from the Gulf Stream sent its warming influence to temper the chilling ocean breezes, so that vegetation was quite as forward, if not more so, than on the main-land. The few remaining sheep served to furnish fresh mutton. There was a cow, two or three pigs, and chickens by the score. With a competent housekeeper, Harry could advertise for summer boarders, should he ever be incline to do thus.

But it was all too unreal and almost incredible for Harry to take in at once. Only the evening before he had been told that he was literally homeless, penniless, and in a sense friendless. Now, he had a position as sailing-master of a neat yacht; he was the nominal owner, at least, of an Island surrounded by an atmosphere of almost mysterious romance, with a comfortable roof over his head, and at least three newly-made friends.

Mateo had showed them a rude pantry filled with stores of various kinds; two guns hung over the mantel; there was fishing-gear in the out-house, and a staunch dory at the pier-head.

No wonder, then, that after all explanations had been made Harry sat in a sort of bewildered maze, staring into the glowing coals while Mateo prepared a very appetizing meal.

"It seems all the time as though I was dreaming, and that I should wake up in my hammock on the St. Mary's berth-deck," he confided to Daniel as, after supper, Mateo cleared up as deftly as a woman could have done.

"If it's a dream I don't want'er wake up. Do you, Don?" returned Daniel, patting the head of the dog, who lay outstretched before the blaze; and Don's expressive silence gave assent.

Swinging canvas cots in another room took the place of the regulation bedstead. These Mateo and Marlock had rigged in place of the berths which had formerly occupied one side of the sleeping apartment.

"Marlock shall be a bad fellow," said Mateo, shaking his head gravely, "and only for that I must leave my doctor, I live not with him so long. Last summer he begins the drink again. I wonder the Doctor have kept him till now."

"He'll kick up a row, likely, when he comes to take his things away," remarked Daniel.

Mateo shrugged his shoulders.

"Poof!" he said, with a careless gesture; "not if

I shall be here. Marlock know too much for that. Unless," added Mateo, slowly, "he has in him the drink—then he fears no one—not anything."

"What things are his?" asked Harry.

"The sea-chest yonder, and the long gun for ducks in the corner," was the reply. "And perhaps——"

Checking himself, Mateo arose, and taking up the long, muzzle-loading gun, proceeded to draw the heavy charge of duck-shot, as well as the powder. The cap he left in its place on the nipple.

"One never knows," oracularly announced Mateo. And then there was silence for a few moments—meaning, of course, silence between the three; for on Gregg Island, in storm or shine, the air forever is vibrant with the boom of breakers against the rocky shore.

"Say, Mateo," suddenly asked ever-inquisitive Daniel, "what s'pose 'tis this ere Marlock knows about the Doctor? He flung out somethin' of the kind when he got the grand bounce aboard the yacht."

"Do you know what for the man was hung in Barmouth this spring?"

"No—what was it for?" was Daniel's eager response.

"He did not know to mind his own business," replied Mateo, gravely.

Harry laughed. Daniel smiled rather feebly.

"Guess it's time to be turnin' in," he said, sheep-ishly. "Come on, Harry."

CHAPTER VII.

GREGG ISLAND HAS UNWELCOME VISITORS.

A S SOON as the morning meal was over Harry and his friend started to explore their new domains, leaving Mateo to his self-imposed duty of clearing up.

Climbing to the rocky eminence back of the stone building, they were able to take in the shape and size of the Island, which, irregular in shape, appeared to be about three miles in length by two in width.

The eastern side, extending from the rocky summit where they were standing, was a wilderness of ledge, thrown up in every direction by the blasting which had gone on at intervals through many years. For, after the soil of the Island had been pretty thoroughly dug over, it had occurred to a later generation of Greggs that somewhere among the rocks and ledges existed a cave or subterranean cavern where the treasure so long sought for might be hidden.

Such, indeed, had always been Doctor Gregg's theory, and for almost an entire season he had a gang of men at work drilling and blasting under Marlock's supervision, but with no better success than his predecessors.

This Mateo explained as he joined them later on. Then he pointed out the sheep, some forty in number, grazing on a grassy southern slope; after which he pointed out the abundant growth of spruce, hemlock and pine at the northern extremity, which, with wreck stuff and drift-wood, was sufficient to supply them with fire-wood indefinitely.

The ocean outlook was of course something wonderfully grand. From the Barmouth heights only the smaller vessels at sea were discernible with the naked eye; but from the highest point of Gregg Island, on a clear day, one may see the great ocean steamers in the distance, and ships, barks, and every manner of sailing-vessel standing in various directions.

Mateo, who had brought a glass with him, pointed it suddenly in the direction of one of the smaller craft in sight headed directly for the Island.

"I think it shall be Marlock," he said quietly. "And—yes," he continued, "there are with him one, two, three others."

By common consent the trio made their way back to the dwelling.

- "You are sure his chest and gun are all, Mateo?"
- "Ma foi, yes. He brought no more to the Island when he come here four—yes, five—year ago."
- "Very well," said Harry quietly; "then we'll set them outside. I don't want Marlock, especially if he's drunk, rummaging around my house."

"That was much better, indeed," Mateo returned with an approving nod. This was speedily done, after which Harry and Dan seated themselves on a rude bench outside the door. Mateo bent his glass upon the occupants of the boat as it rounded to skillfully at the little pier.

"Give 'em a bit of a song to let 'em know we're here!" called Marlock. "Start ahead, Jack."

Sixteen sailors on a dead man's chist,
Oh! ho! ho! and a bottle o' rum;
The sharks and the licker they did for de rest,
Oh! ho! ho! and a bottle o' rum!

The leading lines of this touchingly suggestive song were hoarsely chanted by a powerfully-built, dark-complexioned sailor, the others joining unsteadily in the chorus.

Mateo muttered something and closed the glass with a sharp snap.

"Mille tonerre!" he said; "Spanish Jack, that was with Marlock in the opium vessel! What bad wind blow him to Barmouth? And the other shall look like a Malay or Lascar."

"Be they pirates?" asked Dan, vaguely. Perhaps the song, together with his surroundings, induced the question.

"Spanish Jack shall be not much better!" was the grim reply.

"They'll hardly dare to trouble us," said Harry, affecting an unconcern he did not quite feel.

"That shall depend," responded Mateo, with utmost coolness.

Stepping inside for a moment, he came obringing the stout double-gun from over the mant

"Let it to lay across your knees—we may go the shore to shoot duck for dinner by and by Quien sabe?"

As Harry obeyed, his quick eye noted a slight bulge, as if something like a concealed weapon, on the inside of Mateo's rough shirt.

Possibly Dan, detecting the same, began putting two and two together in his mind with satisfactory results; for, without speaking, he brought from the nearest out-building about four feet of the butt of a stout ash oar. Seating himself beside his friend, he pulled out his jack-knife and began trimming the broken end with an air of easy composure.

"In time of peace prepare for war—eh, Mateo?" laughed Harry; but his heart beat rather faster than usual as the three new-comers, talking very fast and loud, made their way up from the shore toward the house, Marlock limping on ahead.

At the sight of his sea-chest, with the gun lying across the top, Marlock stopped short.

"Whose doing is this—some of yours, Matt?" he shouted wrathfully, while his two ill-favored companions bent sinister glances upon the trio.

Before Mateo could reply Harry spoke. And let me say, just here, that Harry Darrel had trained Armed

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himself to speak and act with remarkable coolness, no matter what his inward state of excitement might be.

"It is my doing," he said calmly. "Why, what was the harm?"

"And who the blazes are you, with your dandy sailor rig and your fancy airs, taking charge here as though you owned the premises?"

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"I do own the premises. At least I happen to have a deed of the Island and buildings, properly executed and signed by Doctor Gregg himself."

Marlock uttered a fearful execration. The darkskinned sailor called Spanish Jack whistled softly, while the third man—a lithe-looking copper-hued Malay with snaky eyes—glanced furtively from one to the other.

"It is not use to make words, Marlock," said Mateo, speaking for the first time; "the Doctor can do as he wish with his own. He give the title of the Island to him because young Darrel save his life ——"

"Darrel!" fiercely interrupted Marlock, while Spanish Jack himself uttered an ejaculation. "The name isn't a common one. You're not the son of Captain Corydon Darrel of the old brig Newton?"

"I am. Did you know my father?"

Marlock sober would never have committed himself as did Marlock somewhat intoxicated.

"Know him?" he repeated, with a savage execration. I ought to—it was he who made me the cripple I am!" Harry stared at the scowling speaker aghast, but Mateo was equal to the occasion.

"Ah! it was Capitan Darrel put the bullet in your hip, then," he said; "and they tell me he shoot Spanish Jack through his arm same time."

A fierce, swift movement on the part of the Spaniard seemed to verify Mateo's statement.

"Yes? Then it was true!" But—these did not happen, remember, till you two have kill the brig's both officers in the mutiny which Marlock did himself head."

Marlock's dark visage flushed visibly.

"It's a lie!" he growled. "I had nothing to do with the mutiny; nor, for that matter, did Spanish Jack. But never mind that now. Stand aside, young fellow; I want to go in." For Harry, during the harangue, had risen to his feet, and with the gun thrown carelessly in the hollow of his arm stepped inside the door-way.

"You can't come in here!"

The faintest possible tremor might be detected in Harry's even voice as he thus spoke; but it was the tremor of excitement, not of fear, as Marlock supposed.

"Can't eh? Jack! Lewy!"

The two sailors stepped forward. So, on the other side, did Mateo, whose right hand was hidden inside his woolen shirt.

Dan, shutting his jack-knife with a sharp click,

stood erect quite cool and self-possessed, clutching the oar-butt.

"Dunno's I've got much to say about it," he growled, "but till the boss there'n the door says you're to come in, you jes' stay out!"

Dan emphasized the command by thrusting the end of the oar-butt between Marlock's ribs and pushing him backward with sudden force.

Marlock fell heavily on Spanish Jack, immediately behind him, who, in turn, carromed against the Lascar so unexpectedly that the three went down in an undignified heap.

Spanish Jack was first on his feet, as lithe as a cat. With incredible swiftness he drew and threw open a murderous-looking dirk. Grasping it by the point, the infuriated Spaniard launched it through the air.

The knife-blade, barely grazing Dan's ear, buried itself half-way to the haft in the door-post!

"Voila!" exclaimed the Maltese, for the first time showing signs of excitement; "this shall go quite far enough. Vamos!"

Snatching the double-gun from Harry, Mateo threw back both hammers with an ominous click.

"You sail once with me, Marlock," he said sternly; "maybe you know I not play the fool when my temper shall get up. Take you' chest and leave!"

Marlock, who had regained his feet, stood glaring savagely at the trio without speaking. Spanish

Jack whispered something in his ear. The sailor nodded. Motioning to the Lascar, the two took up the chest and gun.

"I'm going inside that house before we leave the Island, and don't forget it!" he called, as the three moved slowly away.

"Try it if you dare!" was Harry's defiant response. No reply was made. Some fifty yards from the shore, at the left, was a bit of greensward backed up by some scrubby birches and pines. Instead of making their way to the pier, the three turned toward the grassy slope. Setting down the seachest, Marlock, with the Lascar, started for their boat.

- "What in time be those scallywags up to now?"
- "They shall mean to stay awhile," deliberately returned Mateo; "for, see—they unbend the mainsail of the boat. Of this they will make a camp."
- "But what right have these fellows to camp on my Island without leave?" hotly exclaimed Harry.
- "The might makes right," returned Mateo, "and we cannot ourselves help."
- "The law would make 'em hus'le mighty quick," said Dan, "'specially if some one swore out a warrant ag'in that dark-complected chap for slingin' knives at folks!"

Mateo, who with difficulty had extracted the dirkblade from the door-post, gave his habitual shouldershrug.

- "The law is upon the main-land, which is away ten miles. Marlock know that very well," he responded.
- "Easy enough to go ashore for a sheriff or some-body," suggested Dan.
- "But look you—only myself can alone manage the Nixie. That leave you two to guard the house, and against three men who, in this place remote, shall stop at not'ings, so they accomplish some end Marlock have in mind."

CHAPTER VIII.

MISCHIEF IS MEDITATED.

To PUT it mildly, it was a curious state of affairs.

"You're sure Marlock has left nothing in the house?" again asked Harry.

"Certainly sure."

"Then what does he want to get inside so bad for?" was Harry's perplexed query.

But this Mateo could not answer, as a matter of course, and there was nothing to do but wait for what might come next.

"They'll get starved out in time unless there's a big stock of provisions aboard their boat," said Harry thoughtfully.

"There are the sheep, and fishes in the sea," returned Mateo.

Harry compressed his lips tightly.

"If they try sheep-stealing I'll try bird-shot," he responded; "but I don't think it will come to that. Mateo, if you can manage the Nixie alone, get back to Barmouth as soon as possible and explain things to Doctor Gregg. Perhaps he'll send a couple of

officers off with you. Any way, go—the sooner the better."

Mateo expostulated in vain. Harry was firm. In fact he secretly thought that Mateo rather magnified the possible danger of leaving them for a few hours. They might—probably would—be annoyed or insulted by the unwelcome visitants; but further than that Harry did not anticipate any particular trouble, despite the bad character Mateo had given them.

Very reluctantly Mateo finally consented.

"Keep you the watch perpetual," he said emphatically, "and use your gun for to defend if it shall be the need; but we must wait till they go from their boat."

"Mateo," suddenly asked Harry, "how long is it since the mutiny you spoke of?"

"I think it shall be some twelve year," slowly replied Mateo, "for I hear of it then when I was in 'Frisco, and I was not there since."

"Twelve years ago! Why, father was lost in the Newton twelve years ago."

"That was the time it happened," Mateo returned with a look of surprise. "I suppose you know of it, of course?"

No, Harry had never known aught excepting a childish recollection of being told by Caleb Welter that the Newton went down somewhere near Cape Horn with all hands—or so it was presumed, as neither the brig nor any survivor was ever heard from.

This he explained to Mateo.

"It was not just as that," said the Maltese slowly. "The brig carry six for ard. Marlock with Spanish Jack was two. They plan to take the brig. They kill both officers before Cap'n get on deck. He shoot Marlock in his thigh—lame him for life. All hands were drive for ard. Then come sudden shift of wind—blow great guns from nor west. The brig drive upon the beam-ends and four men wash from the decks. Helas! The evil ones—Marlock and Spanish Jack—with the steward, are not lost. The Capitan call to cut away the mast, himself seizing the ax. But, les laches!—cowards that they were!—they take the only boat and escape!"

"Leaving my father ----"

"To go down with the brig. They tell that she sunk almost before they pull clear. It may be true—who shall say? Marlock and the Spaniard both have wounds. The steward seem to have kept the boat afloat for four days. Then they are pick up and bring to 'Frisco. The three tell there a story straight that the brig founder at sea, but speak nothing of the mutiny—ah, no! Only that one night, in drink, Marlock tell me all, I should not know."

Harry had grown very pale while listening to this strange story.

Strange complication indeed! Here, not a pistolshot distant, were two desperate men who, if not actually his father's murderers, had been instrumental in his death. For of course Captain Darrel must have been lost with the brig—of that there could be no doubt, after all these years of silence. Then Harry turned his eyes toward the boat again.

The men were just leaving it, carrying not only the sail they had unbent, but some stores and a twogallon jug which might contain water or something more potent. These things they conveyed to the clump of spruces. It looked very much as though they intended to stop some little time.

"Go now, Mateo, while they're pitching the tent," advised Harry. And ten minutes later the Nixie was standing slowly out through the inlet.

"S'posin' the wind should stop blowin' before Mateo got ashore?" said Dan dubiously.

For in fact the surface of the sea was only ruffled by cat's-paws, alternated by long expanses of calm, and in the south lay a summer fog-bank.

"Then he'll have to lay becalmed until it springs up again," returned Harry with a glance in the direction of the cutter, which was moving slowly away from the shore.

Marlock and the two suspended their work for a moment or two as they saw the Nixie get under way. Then, having pitched their tent, a fire was built, and over it a camp-kettle hung in gipsy fashion;

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after which the three, lighting their pipes, lay stretched out on the greensward talking earnestly together.

"I'd like to know what them fellers was hatchin' up," remarked Dan uneasily, as they watched the animated gestures indulged in, particularly by Marlock, who seemed to be chief spokesman.

Harry, who was looking at the Nixie through the glass, did not reply. He was noticing that the fogbank had begun to rise slowly, while the breeze itself only came in light, fitful puffs from the south-east.

Dan stood for a moment irresolute; then without apprising his friend of his intentions, he slipped away. Making a long detour to the right through the old apple-orchard, he succeeded in getting the spruce-clump between himself and the campingparty. Crawling on his hands and knees, he reached it from the rear, and wormed his way through some shrubby underbrush to a position where he could see and hear what was going on.

"But vot is it for that you make so much to get in the house?" the Spaniard was saying.

"That's my business!" was the gruff response.

"It's enough that I've left something behind which I'm going to have before I leave the Island."

"Mebbe money?" hazarded the Malay, with a cunning light in his narrow, snake-like eyes.

"If it was, d'ye suppose I'd trust myself with you two chaps? Either of you'd knife me for ten gold

sov'rins, if you could get behind my back to do it!"

Marlock's extreme plainness of speech did not seem to offend his companions in the least. Spanish Jack only laughed and shrugged his shoulders. The Malay nodded his head as though affirming rather than denying the soft impeachment.

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"No," said Marlock, knocking the ashes from his pipe, "it isn't money, but it's something a certain man I knows of in Barmouth would give money for, all the same."

"He means Doctor Gregg, I'll bet," thought sharpwitted Dan, and he listened the more intently.

"Well, there was nothings to hinder that you gets this—whatever it shall be," returned Spanish Jack with a yawn. Only dem two boys lef' there now."

"Better go spry. Mateo, you call him, bring back officer from shore, likely. Den we skip."

This was the Malay's suggestive advice delivered between puffs at his pipe.

"He'll have to get ashore first, though," was Marlock's grim response, "and what with the calm and the fog strikin' in, that won't be to-night or I lose my guess. So we'd best wait till after dark."

"S'pose dem two young feller show much fight? Won't do go too far. Plenty law ashore—mebbe we all get into prison."

"Spanish Jack's remark elicited an oath from Marlock.

"Law or no law, I'm going inside the house!" he growled, "and if they show fight, so much the worse for 'em—especially that young Darrel," he added fiercely, "for I don't forget how his father crippled me for life!"

"Mebbe you put your head in hangman's noose—all same I don't," was the dogged response.

"Always careful of your own hide!" sneered Marlock. "But don't worry. I'll take whatever danger there is myself. And haven't we got a boat staunch enough to cross the western ocean in if need be!—one that can show her heels to anything along shore unless it is the Nixie!"

But Dan had heard enough. Cautiously retracing his steps he rejoined his companion, who was decidedly surprised to learn that Dan had been playing the part of scout and spy, and still more so when he learned the result.

"It don't seem possible that Marlock can be so desperate and revengeful," said Harry. And yet when he remembered what Mateo had told him, he had to admit that it might be possible after all.

As the afternoon drew to a close it became evident that the rascally trio were priming themselves for their evening's undertaking. The sound of boisterous merriment, increasing from hour to hour, reached their ears. Marlock's strong voice arose in a continuation of his favorite sea-song:

He winked and blinked like an owl in a tree; Yo! ho! and a bottle of rum; And he sunk 'em all to the bottom of the sea, Yo! ho! and a bottle of rum.

Now all take warning by this here song;
Yo! ho! ho! and a bottle of rum;
And never drink whisky unless it's strong;
Yo! ho! ho! and a bottle of rum.

The calm still continued, and the darkness which finally shut down over the face of the deep was intensified by the thick, clinging fog.

In a deep embrasure of one of the front windows stood a ship's masthead lantern with a powerful reflector. This, being lighted, sent a broad shaft of light into the gloom. No one could well approach the heavy door, which was secured inside, without being seen.

The rear of the house was built directly against the perpendicular base of the bluff itself, so there could be no danger from that quarter. The window at either end was small and some distance from the ground.

"I can't understand how they expect to make an entrance," said Harry, after having completed their final preparations, as the two sat in anxious expectancy, waiting for the coming of the attacking party.

Neither did Dan. Yet both felt convinced that Marlock had some definite plan of action in view, else he would never have been so determined.

The silence without was unbroken save for the

sullen boom of the breakers. From a front window the two watchers could see the dim spark of the distant camp-fire, but the noise and singing had ceased.

Hour after hour dragged slowly by. It occurred to Harry that the revelers had subsided into drunken slumber, forgetful of their intended attack; and finally, as the hands of the noisy-ticking marine clock reached the hour of two, Dan, made bold by his former success, declared in favor of a second reconnoissance.

"Who knows," he said eagerly, "but we might find 'em all sound asleep and take the whole caboodle pris'ners, same as Jack Dashaway did with the three outlaws in 'The Boy Ranger; or, The Young Scout of the Sierras?"

But Harry, who had never read this highflown work of fiction, or indeed any of its kin, rather discouraged the suggestion.

"It's one thing to read of such wholesale operations and quite another to carry them out," he said dryly. Yet Dan was bent upon carrying his point, and Harry consented that under cover of the darkness he could steal toward the camp to discover, if possible, the true condition of things.

CHAPTER IX.

ALMOST A TRAGEDY.

NBARRING the door, the two peered cautiously out. A slight breeze had sprung up, but the fog was denser than ever. Either owing to this latter fact, or because the camp-fire had entirely died down, not the faintest glimmer was visible in the direction where the distant tent was presumed to be.

"You'll sure get turned round in the fog, Dan; I wouldn't start off on such a wild-goose chase," urged Harry; but his friend was immovable. As Dan's mother had often said, "Dan was a good boy, but sotter'n the everlasting hills;" which meant that Dan was slightly inclined to obstinacy.

"When you hear me whis'le three times, unbar the door and let me in," he said, throwing the double-gun in the hollow of his arm after the presumed fashion of Kit Carson or our later-day Buffalo William; and rather uneasily, Harry, having seen Dan, so to speak, swallowed up in the fog, closed and refastened the door.

The marine clock ticked off a half-hour, three-

quarters, then the hour, but there were no signs of Dan's return.

Suddenly Don, who had been dozing before the fire, pricked up his ears. Jumping up, he ran to the door, where he began snuffing and whining uneasily.

"If that was Dan he'd whistle, of course," was Harry's very natural reflection. That it was not his friend became evident a moment later, when three or four heavy blows on the door-panel, apparently delivered with the butt of a gun, brought out a chorus of excited barks from Don.

"Who's there?" demanded Harry.

"It's me — Marlock! Let us in without any bother and you won't be hurt; otherwise, we'll tear the building down over your heads!"

Now, this was the most foolish of threats. Captain Kydd had builded better than he knew when he had the stone dwelling laid in mortar and cement a century before. With a score of men at his back, Marlock could not have carried out his menace.

"You can't come in, as I've told you once before, and you may get hurt if you try!" returned Harry rather defiantly, at the same time lamenting the absence of Dan and the double-gun.

"They'll shoot from a window, p'r'aps," Harry heard the Spaniard remark in tones a trifle tremulous.

"Shoot?" repeated Marlock scornfully. "Neither

of 'em could hit a barn-door if they tried! Stand aside if you're scared—you and Lewy, both. I'll fix the cartridge under the door myself."

Marlock's meaning flashed across Harry's mind at once. He was about to effect an entrance by the use of one of the dynamite cartridges such as had been used in blasting on the Island—though it *might* be only a threat intended to reach his ear and bring him to terms, after all.

Stealing to the window, Harry peered cautiously out. The broad shaft of light from the reflecting lamp illumined the three men at the front of the building. The Malay carried Marlock's gun. Spanish Jack stood a little in the rear, watching the movements of Marlock, who was stooping over adjusting something at the base of the door.

"It's as likely to blow the house down as the door," was the alarmed thought of Harry, who had read and heard of the tremendous explosive power of dynamite, and he was on the point of announcing an unconditional surrender when a startling change in the programme occurred; for all at once the Malay, uttering an exclamation, threw the gun to his shoulder and seemed to aim at some object seen through the darkness. But only the sharp detonation of an exploding cap followed, and almost instantaneously the report of a fowling-piece rang through the mist-laden atmosphere. With a wild shriek Marlock sprang at least three feet in the air and fell forward on his face.

Horrified beyond the power of speech at the tragedy thus suddenly enacted before his eyes, Harry rushed toward the door. Yet with his hand on the oak bar he hesitated. All unarmed as he was, would it be prudent to venture into the hands of his two remaining enemies, who were indulging in terrible imprecations?

As he stood thus in indecision, he suddenly heard their retreating foot-steps.

"They are carrying Marlock's body away," said Harry, "and it must have been Dan who fired the fatal shot!"

A moment later the signal-whistle sounded outside the door. Harry hurriedly admitted his friend.

Dan was drenched with fog—his features were pale and working convulsively. Placing the gun in a corner of the room without speaking, he dropped into a chair and covered his face with his hands, while his frame was shaken by some inward emotion.

Restraining his own agitation, Harry laid his hand gently on his friend's shoulder.

"Don't take on so, Dan," he said as steadily as he could. "It was a terrible thing to do, and I can imagine how you must feel; but what we've got to think of now is——"

The strange expression on Dan's suddenly uplifted face brought Harry's speech to an abrupt ending; and all at once, to the latter's dismay, Dan ex-

ploded in a shriek of laughter that made the rafters ring.

"Good Heavens! The shock has driven him crazy!" Such were Harry's unuttered thoughts as Dan, holding both hands against his stomach, roared and bellowed and haw-hawed till his very ear-tips were purple.

"Oh! oh! I shall bu'st!" groaned Dan. And really for a moment or two this did not seem so very unlikely.

"I didn't mean to shoot," he gasped, wiping his streaming eyes, as Harry stood staring at him in ludicrous dismay, "but while I was workin' back to the house they went by me in the dark, tellin' what they was goin' to do with some dynamity. And as I begun creepin' up, the Malay critter snapped Marlock's empty gun at me in the dark. I could see everything plain by the light in the winder, and when I caught sight of Marlock, back-to, in his shirt-sleeves, bendin' over in sech a temptin' sort of a way, I—the gun went off! It wasn't nothin' only bird-shot, and I was nigh forty yard away, but——"

And here, as though overcome by the remembrance, Dan roared again—this time joined by Harry, whose relief can be imagined.

"I thought you had killed him," explained the latter as soon as he recovered himself somewhat.

"Killed him?" repeated Dan, with another explosion; "well, I guess not. Only he'll have to sit

down standin' up for a spell, I reckon! Hark? What's that?"

Re-opening the door, they listened. The rattle of ascending mast-hoops from the little harbor reached their ears, and a lantern moving from place to place on the pier suggested that the enemy had struck their tent and were about evacuating the premises.

"Prob'ly they're hurryin' Marlock ashore, so's to have his wounds 'tended to," suggested Dan with a chuckle.

It is more likely, however, that the uprising breeze which, with the passing thunder-squall, was scattering the fog, had warned them that the Nixie's return would not be long delayed.

Be this as it may, the watchers saw the little schooner's lights move slowly away with heartfelt thankfulness, and then they began brewing coffee and talking over the exciting incidents of the evening; after which, leaving Don on guard, the two turned in.

The Nixie, with Doctor Gregg, accompanied by a couple of officers as passengers, arrived early on the following morning to find the birds of ill-omen had flown, and the recital of Dan's exploit gave no little amusement to them all.

At least to all but Doctor Gregg, who was greatly exasperated at Marlock's "infernal audacity," as he termed it.

"I wish the bird-shot had been a bullet and it had

been aimed about three feet higher," he muttered morosely.

"But why were the men so bent upon getting into the building?" was the inquiry of one of the officers.

Doctor Gregg had no idea. Neither had Mateo Harry and Dan preserved a discreet silence. Both remembered that Marlock claimed to have some sort of hold upon Doctor Gregg, and they felt an intuition that the papers which Marlock was so anxious to get hold of were in some way connected with the matter.

"Well, we're rid of the scoundrel for a time," said the Doctor, frowning involuntarily. "Remember, Harry," he added sharply, "the Island is yours now. You've a perfect right to say who shall or shall not land here, and are justified in—a—using aggressive measures, if necessary, to protect your rights."

This opened the way for Harry to expostulate on the subject of accepting a gift of such value; but he might have spared his breath.

"I don't do such things hastily," he said. "I explained my reasons by letter, and there's no more to be said about it."

Harry thought of much more that might be said, but of course he held his peace under the circumstances.

Leaving Mateo with Dan on the Island, the Nixie, in charge of the new commander for the first time, sailed back to Barmouth Harbor.

Now, since the decadence of the ship-building interests Barmouth has become somewhat noted as a summer watering-place. Two "mammoth hotels" sprung up in the same year. Cottages were built close to the shore and purchased by wealthy gentlemen from neighboring cities, and real estate in the vicinity took a decided "boom."

The season was just beginning to open. The Boston steamer, which touched three times a week at Barmouth, left crowds of tourists and pleasure-seekers. Half-a-dozen or more yachts belonging to the New York Squadron had run in *en route* for Mount Desert, and among them was the small though expensive steam-yacht Lorna Doon, owned by Young Goldin of Boston.

Now young Goldin's widowed mother was a Welter of Wayback—sister to Jabez and Caleb. Her deceased husband had left a large fortune, made in the liquor traffic, to be held by her in trust for their only son Clarence till he came of age.

He had visited his cousin Blair at Wayback once. Harry dimly remembered him as a supercilious boy with light hair and a snub nose who was perpetually boasting of his own importance; and of course he looked with scorn upon orphaned Harry, Caleb's penniless protege.

Harry smiled quietly to himself as, standing at the Nixie's wheel, he steered the swift-winged cutter skillfully past the stern of the Lorna Doon, for under the awning sat Blair Welter, trying to look perfectly at his ease among a dozen or more of Clarence Goldin's particular friends, the most of whom were about his own age. Blair, having heard of the yacht's arrival in Barmouth, had cordially invited himself aboard, and I regret to say had not been received as effusively as might have been the case had he not been a "country cousin."

But Blair's self-complacency was such that he remained blissfully unconscious of snubs and scarcely-concealed chaff. In Wayback he was looked upon as quite a "fast" youth by virtue of visiting Boston from time to time, from whence he always brought back a new suit of clothes and a great deal of boastful talk as to his doings and dissipations in company with "my Cousin Clarence—heir to a cool million when he comes of age."

Blair had not recognized Harry as the Nixie swept past and ranged skillfully alongside the pier to the audibly expressed approval of sundry idlers and fishermen, who stood by to catch the lines.

"Yer new skipper handles the Nixie in better shape than that Marlock ever pretended to, Doctor," said one of them, to Harry's secret gratification.

But the Doctor only nodded, and, having satisfied the two officers for their trouble, hurried Harry off up town.

CHAPTER X.

DOCTOR GREGG'S DAUGHTER.

THE LORNA DOON lay alongside the wharf for the purpose of taking in a few needed stores for the use of the crew.

The after-cabin, it is almost unnecessary to say, was abundantly provided for in that respect—especially as regards the wine-lockers. Young Goldin prided himself in being considered a connoisseur, particularly of champagne.

More or less of this sparkling beverage had been consumed at dinner. There were flushed faces and thickened tongues among these scions of the F. F. B. Silly laughter and coarse repartee were heard on every side. The same number of youth from the lower orders of society, under similar conditions from beer-guzzling, would have been pointed out as awful examples of the evils of intemperance.

"Halloo, there, little Nell Gwynn!—bring your oranges this way. I'm going into the fruit business myself. Buy you out, if we can strike a bargain!"

It was Goldin who thus called to a rather plainly-dressed young girl, a trifle below the average size, who, carrying a basket of fruit on her arm, was pass-

ing along with a quick elastic step toward the end of the pier.

Young Goldin, to do him justice, meant no insult. He was only trying to be funny, and the heir to a fortune can easily establish a reputation for wit among his satellites.

The girl, without replying, cast one quick glance at the gilded youth under the yacht's awning—not a frightened or even an indignant look; but her bright brunette face, which was one of considerable beauty, expressed so much scorn that even young Goldin looked rather abashed.

Blair Welter had been burning to distinguish himself in the eyes of those about him. They should see that he knew a thing or two if he *didn't* happen to live in Boston.

"I'm going to have an orange and a kiss to boot," announced Blair to young Spoonhigh, his next neighbor, tossing aside his cigarette as he spoke.

"Betcher you dassent," languidly returned Spoonhigh, who had banged hair and a retreating chin. At the same time he adjusted a monocle with infinite difficulty and stared very hard at the girl.

"Doosid pwetty face—older 'n I thought for," he said. "'F I was you, Welter, I wouldn't make an ass of myself——"

"You can't—Nature's done it already, Spoonhigh," interrupted some one; and amid the laugh that followed the stale chestnut Blair ran down the gangway plank.

- "Come back, you idiot!" called more than one. But Blair, whose head was slightly muddled, kept on.
- * Ah—I say, Miss," he remarked, coming to a full stor, before the girl, who, pausing near the end of the pier, bent a pair of wonderfully clear dark eyes on his flushed face.

"Well?"

The monosyllable, pronounced with chilling coolness, was disconcerting, to say the least. And—did the Barmouth orange-girls generally dress in blue serge with jaunty sailor-hats? Blair began to think he might be making a mistake, after all.

"Told you he'd back out!" It was the voice of young Spoonhigh from the yacht's quarter.

Blair laid his hand on the girl's arm.

- "It's a bet, doncher know," he said, with what he intended for a fascinating smile. "I want an orange and somethin' else ——"
- "Captain Darrel!—will you come up? Quick, please!"

Captain Darrel! Who—what did she mean by calling in that clear, ringing voice, which betrayed not the slightest tremor of fear or excitement?

The question was answered almost simultaneously. Up the slippery steps leading to the boat-stage below flew an athletic young fellow wearing the brass and blue of a yacht's sailing-master, and in front of his jaunty gold-banded cap was the word "Nixie."

Blair's hand unconsciously detaining the girl and her own half-appealing look told the whole story.

"Let go that young lady's arm!" said Harry in a repressed voice which should have warned Blair Welter, who for a moment was mute with surprise at the sight of the new-comer.

But a laugh from the appreciative group aboard the Lorna Doon settled it.

"Not for you, you beggar!" he coarsely responded.

The next thing of which Blair Welter became clearly conscious was of being suddenly seized by the coat-collar and spun violently round like a teetotum. And alas that this had happened so near the edge of the wharf; for, catching his foot against the cap-sill, over he went!

A shout and a rush from the deck of the Lorna Doon. Part ran for ropes and called wildly for a lifepreserver. Two or three, among whom was young Goldin in his shirt-sleeves, ran toward Harry Darrel, with the evident intention of vengeance.

Harry took it all very quietly. The tide was nearly out, leaving only some two feet of water on the malodorous harbor-mud. There wasn't the slightest danger of Blair's drowning.

Stepping in front of the girl, who, in place of screaming or fainting, seemed singularly cool and composed, Harry without the slightest bluster dropped his hands into a position which showed an evident knowledge of the art of self-defense.

Young Goldin, despite his frequent boasts of proficiency in sparring, stopped short. There was something in the attitude and resolute face of his opponent that he did not fancy.

- "I—I—don't fight with common sailors!" he loftily remarked, and the girl under Harry's protection smiled mirthfully.
- "If I were a common sailor," she said in a clear, distinct voice, "I would not fight with the son of a man who made a fortune by liquor-selling!"

Young Goldin's face became redder than ever, and muttering something unintelligible he backed away to join the crowd, who were throwing ropes to Blair Welter, waist-deep in mud and water.

"Will you kindly put me aboard the yacht Nixie, Captain Darrel?" said the girl, addressing Harry with wonderful ease and self-possession.

"The Nixie?" repeated Harry in considerable astonishment. "Why—er—Miss, I'm sorry, but I'm waiting for Doctor Gregg, the yacht's owner, and his little girl. They're going off to the Island, yonder."

Another smile, displaying a dimple at either corner of the pretty mouth, crossed the bright brunette features.

"Ah! but I'm the little girl!" she said with a

low laugh. "The Doctor won't be down till later."

To say that Harry was astonished is to put it lightly. Doctor Gregg had always mentioned his daughter as "his little girl," or "his little Doris," and here was a somewhat diminutive beauty quite near his own age.

Murmuring a blundering apology, Harry led Miss Doris down to the boat and began pulling toward the Nixie, at anchor in the deeper water beyond; but he involuntarily smiled as Blair Welter, covered with mud and sea-grass, with water streaming from his soaked clothing, danced madly on the pier-head, shaking his fist and shouting wrathful threats after the receding boat.

Doris, who had the tiller-ropes, turned and laughed gleefully.

"I am very glad—it will be a lesson to him," she presently remarked; "but I never expected to be taken for an orange-girl!" And then she went on to explain that the fruit was simply intended for consumption on the trip to Gregg Island.

Having reached the yacht, Harry sent Mateo back with the boat to wait for the Doctor's coming, he not wishing to have any further altercation with the youth of the Lorna Doon.

Miss Doris seemed perfectly at home on board the Nixie; nor did she show the slightest sign of embarrassment at the prospect of a tete-a-tete with the good-looking young sailing-master. Indeed, her frankness and unconventionality put Harry at ease immediately.

With rare tact for one so young, she drew from him the principal points in his simple history without appearing in the least inquisitive.

"I knew you because father has spoken of you so often," she said simply; "and I did not feel in the least troubled at the little scene on the wharf, because——"

Here Doris stopped and seemed to hesitate.

"Because what?" asked Harry curiously.

"I knew," she steadily continued, "that any one brave enough to save father's life, as you did, could easily protect his daughter; and I want to thank you for doing both."

Doris put out her small hand as she spoke. Harry took it as frankly as offered; and both felt instinctively that, despite the difference in their stations in life, a compact of real friendship had thus been sealed between the two.

To relieve his slight embarrassment Harry, taking the binocular, turned it toward the wharf, where a slight commotion was visible, while Doris descended to the cabin with her wraps.

The cause of the commotion was perfectly plain. Doctor Gregg, bare-headed and in a tremendous rage, seemed to be haranguing the young fellows from the Lorna Doon, who appeared rather aghast at his display of wrath.

Mateo, with folded arms and gravely imperturbable face, stood a little distance away, ready, if necessary, to aid and abet the irate Doctor by word or deed.

Suddenly — probably by reason of some insolent retort—Harry saw the Doctor pounce upon the nearest.

"Young Goldin, by Jove!" exclaimed Harry with a rapturous chuckle.

With a display of strength and agility quite remarkable in a man of his years, the Doctor threw the dudish youth suddenly across his knee. Holding him, despite his frantic struggles, in the favorite position of the mother who caresses her offspring with a slipper, Doctor Gregg administered with the flat of his muscular hand a spanking such as young Goldin had probably never received since his earliest childhood.

Then, releasing his writhing victim, Doctor Gregg put on his hat, which Mateo had silently extended, and was rowed from the pier amid the enthusiastic plaudits of an admiring crowd.

CHAPTER XI.

DAN MAKES A REMARKABLE DISCOVERY.

DAN WAS one of those handy fellows of the general-utility order who seem to adapt themselves readily to their surroundings.

Dressed in Harry's discarded seaman's apparel, he won golden opinions from both Mateo and the Doctor in his capacity of "spare hand" aboard the Nixie.

But it was distinctively as an agriculturist that Dan distinguished himself. Two days after becoming somewhat domesticated on Gregg Island Dan went to work with spade, hoe and pruning-knife in dead earnest.

The Doctor brought seeds and cuttings from the shore, and lo! a flower-garden was got under way. In short, Dan proved to be simply invaluable.

If he had a failing it was an undue curiosity as to other people's affairs. Dan wanted to know the why and where and when of everything. As Doctor Gregg quietly asserted, Dan was probably birthmarked with an interrogation-point; and one thing about which Dan was greatly exercised was the secret hold, if such it could be called, which Mar-

lock claimed to have over Doctor Gregg. Nothing had been seen of the sailor in Barmouth since the eventful night described in a preceding chapter. Yet through Mateo it accidentally leaked out that Marlock had written the Doctor from a boarding-house in Boston, demanding fifty dollars without delay; but whether Doctor Gregg had complied or not, Dan was unable to discover.

On the day on which the yacht went ashore to bring off the Doctor and "his little girl," for a fortnight's stay on the Island, Dan was left entirely alone for the first time; and no sooner had the Nixie spread her wings Barmouthward than, dropping his hoe, Dan entered the house for a thorough "ransack."

To Dan's credit be it said, his main object was, if possible, to discover the hiding-place where Marlock had secreted the paper he was so anxious to secure—the paper that, to use Marlock's own words, "some one in Barmouth would pay money for"—that "some one" being, presumably, Doctor Gregg.

So Dan went to work in the most systematic manner. He peered into every locker, closet, and hidden nook; he sounded the wainscoting and explored the bottoms of two old sea-chests to find a false bottom; he moved every article of furniture, and searched the walls for secret drawers or hidden closets; but all in vain.

Was it instinct or inspiration that caused Dan's inquisitive eyes to rest upon the broad flat hearthstone before the rude, old-time fire-place?

"I've heard of papers bein' hid in jes' such places," was his unuttered thought, and he bent down to examine closer.

The stone certainly was not an accurate fit for the cutting made in the floor for its reception, and a strict scrutiny showed a piece chipped from the outer edge, as though to admit of a "pry" of some sort.

Curiously enough, the iron poker standing at one side of the empty fire-place had been flattened at one end; and equally singular was the fact that it fitted the notch in the hearth-stone exactly. Dan pried it gently upward. The broad slab yielded; and, putting both hands under its edge, Dan raised it to a level with the sides of the fire-place and rested it there.

Papers? Well, no; but something far more suggestive—a yawning cavity in the floor, from whence a stout flight of steps led downward into pitchy darkness!

"A cellar, and nobody knowed it was here!" he gasped. "Unless Marlock did," Dan added, as an after-thought. Dan's heart beat high with the excitement of discovery as, having lit a candle, he cautiously descended into a dungeon-like inclosure, which proved to have been blown and hewn from the ledge itself. At one side were two mouldy wine-casks; at the other a closet, the door of which had fallen from its hinges.

Raising the candle above his head, he examined the closet with an exclamation of disappointment. A rough board partition with four shelves, on which was a motley collection of dusty bottles—all empty, as a matter of course—had been built directly against the stony wall.

Dan took hold of one of the shelves and shook it.

"Jes' as solid as when the pirates built it. Halloo!

What under the canopy——"

For it was like something in a story of a mysterious castle of which he had read. Shelves and partition all together swung back like a door—which, in fact, the combination had formed.

"If I'm dreamin' I wisht somebody'd give me a shake-up!" Dan muttered in a dazed sort of way as he stared at the opening revealed by the false boarding.

"The 'Mysteries of Udolpho' wasn't a patch to it!" was Dan's bewildered thought; and, screwing his resolution to its highest notch, he passed in out of sight.

Now, I am very sorry that circumstances over which I have no control oblige me to leave Dan thus invisible for a full half-hour.

But there is no Lady-and-Tiger perplexity attempted. It was Dan, who came out at the expiration of some thirty minutes in a dazed sort of way, and, closing the deceptive door after him, made his way to the upper air.

With the same dazed, half-dreamy expression on his shrewd face he mechanically lowered the hearth-stone into its place and put away the extinguished candle. Yet his was not the half-delirious exultation of the treasure-seeker whose eyes have been dazzled by the sight of chests of gold or caskets of jewels. Doubt, wonder and perplexity were there, but no particular exultation.

"Well, the Doctor'll know when he comes to look for himself," muttered Dan, scratching his head vigorously. "And, any way, I guess the eyes of all of 'em'll stick out when I tell 'em."

With this somewhat enigmatical remark Dan turned toward the door.

"Land sake, I'm so kinder flustrated I forget about the rest of it!" he said suddenly. With which remark he produced from an outside pocket a handful of tarnished coins, as also a worn and crumpled letter, both of which he placed on the table with a rather contemptuous movement.

"The money looks like old 'brummagem' coppers, and the letter I can't make head or tail out of, only so fur as it 'ain't anything to do with the Doctor, as I was kind of hopin'; but I can explain the whole bizness when the folks get back. Wonder if the Nixie's anywhere in sight?"

Taking the glass, Dan stepped outside and pointed in the direction of the distant coast-line; but the Nixie's sail was not visible among the scattered fleet of coasters and off-shore fishermen between the Island and the distant shore.

Something was in sight, however, which for the time drove the remembrance of his recent discovery completely from his mind; for beyond the surf-line, just outside the mouth of the little harbor, a school of blackfish were playing—spouting and rolling up their bulk like the whale family.

Mateo had vainly tried to harpoon one from a similar school only the day before. The iron and line were still in the dory at the pier. What a feather in his own cap it would be could he—Dan—succeed in slaying one of these miniature monsters, some of which wield ten or twelve barrels of oil!

Hardly stopping to think of possible danger arising through his own inexperience, Dan dashed down to the shore, and ten minutes later had pulled out through the inlet to the open sea.

The school, numbering some twenty, did not seem as easily "gullied" (frightened) as those of the preceding day. Pulling cautiously ahead toward one of the largest, which lay rising and falling on the long, even swells, Dan seized the iron. When the boat, carried forward by its own momentum, was near enough, he launched the barbed weapon with all his force just behind the dorsal fin.

There was a tremendous splash, a boil and surge of the water, and with a sudden jerk which sent Dan on his back in the dory's bottom the blackfish started off at ten-knot speed, taking Dan in tow!

CHAPTER XII.

DOCTOR GREGG FINDS IN DAN'S LOSS HIS OWN GAIN.

BUT WHERE is your Daniel I've heard so much about?" asked Doris curiously.

The party had landed from the Nixie. The Doctor and Doris had walked to the house accompanied by Harry, whose arms were full of bundles. He had left Mateo to bring the heavier articles at his leisure.

"Daniel?" Oh, he's round somewhere," returned the Doctor with a laugh. "Dan! Oh, Dan!"

But reiterated shouts in every direction failed to bring the missing youth; and thinking he might have wandered away with the gun, the trio entered the house.

The first thing Doctor Gregg saw was the handful of tarnished gold and silver coins lying, with the letter in its dingy envelope, on the table.

Uttering a wondering exclamation, which was echoed by Doris, the Doctor snatched one of the coins from the table.

"A spade guinea of 1724, as I'm a sinner!" he energetically exclaimed. "And not a coin in the

lot under a hundred years old!" he went on with growing excitement, as he examined them one by one. "Where under the sun——"

"It looks as though the mysterious Daniel had found the Gregg treasure," laughed Doris.

"By Jove!" ejaculated the Doctor, catching his breath. "But where is he?"

That was indeed the question! Harry explored the Island in one direction, Mateo in another, the Doctor in a third, but no Daniel was forthcoming. And even Don's sagacity was at fault, for while Dan had been pursuing his search indoors the collie had been making friends with the sheep at the farther end of the Island.

Mateo was the first to notice the missing dory, and gradually a faint suspicion began to creep across Doctor Gregg's mind.

Doris went to her own little apartment, fitted up not unlike the state-room of an old-time ship, to arrange her possessions. Harry started off again with a vain hope that Dan might have rowed round to the other side of the Island.

Doctor Gregg, with a very perplexed face, sat eying the coins on the table before him.

"Well, this confirms my belief in my ancestor's treasure," he said in audible soliloquy. "I wonder how much more of it there was?"

The conundrum was unanswerable. The Doctor shook his head as in dumb assertion of the fact.

"If Dan don't put in an appearance by to-morrow morning," Doctor Gregg went on in the same musing vein, "I shall believe that by accident he stumbled upon the hidden treasure while we were absent, and the temptation being too great for him, he carried it away in the dory. The—the young rascal!"

Doctor Gregg frowned terrifically, and again began examining the tarnished money.

"He left these in his haste, I suppose. Or did he only do it to tantalize me? Confound him! I——"

The cessation of his hasty speech was due to a remembrance of an old letter or folded paper that he suddenly recalled as having been laid with the coins.

"Ha! Yes—to be sure! Perhaps it's a message Dan left behind him. Now, where the—— Oh! on the floor, eh?"

Picking up the document, which in his haste he had pushed from the table a little before, the Doctor dragged it open. As his eyes fell from the headlines to the signature he gave a great start. Then, pale with excitement, Doctor Gregg fairly devoured the mysterious missive from beginning to end.

Not a word did the Doctor say as, carefully placing the letter in his note-case, he passed his hand across his forehead with a slow, sweeping movement, and when he removed it, it was as though the caremarks of a score of years had been swept away.

"Thank God! Oh, thank God!"

The Doctor's lips only formed the words, but his heart spoke them loud enough to be heard in Heaven—or so, at least, I presume.

From the sublime to the ridiculous, if you will so term Doctor Gregg's half-superstition, there is but a step; and turning his eyes toward the discolored stone mantel, the Doctor read aloud the words of the so-called prophetic verse:

Keep Gregg Island Or it Sell, Fortune Never wyth Thee dwel. Gyve Thys Island Out of Hand, Fortune Comes at Thy Comand.

Now Mateo, standing respectfully in the doorway, had seen and heard all that passed, but being a man of comparatively few words, had bided his time for speaking.

"I think, Doctor," he said slowly, "that with the glass I have make out the dory, a fly-speck in the distance, bearing east from the Island. Shall we get the Nixie under way to pursue?"

"To pursue?" vaguely repeated Doctor Gregg— "the dory? Oh, yes! I—I—remember!"

But for all that, it seemed that something of far greater importance than Dan or the dory, or even the possibility of its lading of treasure, had taken possession of the Doctor's mind. Perhaps it was the letter he had read.

"No, Matt," he carelessly replied, "it isn't worth

while. I may be wrong in the matter from beginning to end. And really, if I'm not it's no particular consequence. I've got money enough for Doris and myself; why worry about a treasure that, after all, is only conjectural?"

Mateo elevated his eyebrows and shrugged his shoulders, but turned away without reply. He did not understand it, of course, but *Monsieur le Docteur* was a man *eccentrique*. What would you, then?

Doris, however, who emerged from her room in time to hear her father's concluding remarks, smiled approval.

- "You are right, Papa. You've wasted worry and money enough hunting for money here on the Island that I don't believe ever existed. I'm sorry the immortal Daniel has disappeared so mysteriously, but I don't believe he took any treasure with him, all the same, and these coins he left are probably all he found."
- "Perhaps so," dreamily returned the Doctor. "It don't matter, anyway, as I said."
- "But what has happened to you—you look ten years younger!" suddenly exclaimed the young girl, drawing her father's face around to the light.
- "I have had some good news, dear; some time I will explain everything to you," was the quiet reply. "Now run out and hunt up Harry. Ask him to show you the little rose-garden Dan set out;" which Doris was only too glad to do.

Another day passed, and still another, without word or sign of the recreant Dan. Doctor Gregg made no further reference to his disappearance. Indeed, the worthy Doctor seemed to have taken a new lease of life. It was as though some tremendous burden had been unexpectedly lifted from his shoulders.

It must not be thought that Harry was disloyal to his friend because, as the days drifted by, he gradually seemed to forget him. New associations were around Harry. He was for the first time thrown into contact with a well-read, intellectual man, who treated him as an equal; and quite as pleasing was the companionship of the pure young girl who had given him her friendship.

A bright Portuguese lad—Tom, by name—had been brought from shore to supply Dan's place, as far as possible, as a sort of general assistant; and later Doctor Gregg brought off Mrs. Moriarty who had managed the Gregg household since Doris was a baby. Thus Harry, relieved of much of the drudgery, could give himself up to taking entire charge of the yacht Nixie, for it was approaching midsummer, and the weather was as nearly perfect as it ever can be on the New England coast.

Barmouth had never before been so thronged with visitors. The hotels and boarding houses were insufficient to accommodate representatives of half the States in the Union who came with the advent of the heated season. Sea-side cottages sprung up like mushrooms. The beach was dotted with the tents of campers-out. Along the shore real estate rose to astonishing prices; and when it was rumored that a party of New Yorkers had paid a thousand dollars for Ledge Island, in the mouth of the Harbor, to build a club-house on, speculators in the vicinity began to stir themselves.

The Harbor itself was alive with row-boats, "catrigs," and pleasure-yachts of different sizes. The Nixie was kept perpetually on the move. Every day or two Doctor Gregg went ashore to visit his patients. Doris, who was never so happy as when on the water, made up little sailing-parties whenever wind or weather would permit, and Harry grew to know the location of every rock, reef and hidden channel along the Barmouth shore.

Yet, after all, Harry Darrel had his hours of disquietude. This pleasant life could not last always. Indeed, it was literally but for a season—the summer season. Winter loomed up chillily in the distance, and Harry shivered involuntarily to think of his dreary months of isolation with only Mateo for a companion—of fierce, storm-tossed seas greeting his gaze day after day—of gray skies and freezing spray swept from the angry breakers on the ice-bound Island shore.

For, remember, Harry had no other home but this. As far as relatives were concerned, he stood completely alone in the world. True, he had a warm friend in Doctor Gregg, who would perhaps insist upon making other arrangements for his well-being when the summer season was finished at Barmouth. But Harry felt that the Doctor had already done quite enough for him, and his natural independence would not allow him to accept any further proffer of assistance from this source. The Doctor had given him his Island-home—no mean present in itself. What more could a reasonable person ask or expect?

But Harry kept all these thoughts to himself, as a matter of course. And so the days went on.

CHAPTER XIII.

A PICNIC ON GREGG ISLAND.

THE NIXIE went ashore in charge of Mateo to leave the Doctor and Doris, who had been invited to a dinner-party at one of the hotels.

Harry, taking advantage of his temporary freedom, had been out catching rock-cod, and people who are sensible always dress according to their work when they have anything to do with deep-sea fishing. So on this particular morning Harry wore a ragged, red-flannel shirt, guiltless of collar and stained with salt water. His trousers, rolled up to his bare knees, were not only patched in the rear, but were secured about the waist by a sailor's belt with a sheath-knife attached, and on his head was Mateo's oldest and worst-looking sou'wester. attired, Harry, after a couple of hours' absence, pulled leisurely into the Island cove, to find to his astonishment that the Lorna Doon had dropped anchor there. The steam yacht's sailing-master, who, with two or three of the uniformed crew, were looking over the rail, hailed him:

"Say, you—is Doctor What's-his-name, who owns the Island here, ashore?"

"No!" curtly responded Harry, as, reaching the little pier, he made his boat fast and sprung out.

"Well," called the other, "it don't matter, I suppose. Our party has gone ashore for a bit of a picnic, and I believe they're going to open the old duffer's shanty to set their table in. They won't hurt anything. If they do, Mr. Goldin is able to pay the bills."

"That's cool, to say the least," muttered Harry, hurrying up from the shore toward the stone dwelling, in front of which were assembled half-a-dozen youthful yachtsmen, while near the door stood a hamper of champagne, and another containing various edibles in the way of cold lunch.

"Helloo! here's a native who seems to belong here!" called out one of them, at Harry's approach; "regular amphibious article, 'pon my soul!"

"Where's Welter?" asked another. "He's better acquainted with men and things down East than we are—we'll get him to act as interpreter!"

"Inside, with Goldin and old man Welter, looking over the premises," laughed a third. "I believe the speculative Jabez is going to try to buy Gregg Island for his rich nephew, if he can get it at a low figure."

Harry, speechless with vexation at being caught in such a rig and with indignation at this invasion of private premises, did not wait to hear more.

Stepping quickly inside the door, he had the pleas-

ure of seeing Blair Welter and his father making themselves quite at home. The former, wearing a straw hat very much on one side, sat smoking a cigarette, with his heels on the edge of a table. Welter, Sr., looking very bilious and uncomfortable, as though from a touch of sea-sickness, was peering through the partly-open door of Doris' little room.

"A—there must be a female about the premises, Blair," he was saying; "probably the wife of the party who occupies Doctor—what is it?—Gregg's?—Island."

"Likely enough. But here's the party himself, I fancy; ask him. Well, young feller," addressing Harry, whose face was half-hidden by his sou'wester, "you see we've taken possession, eh?"

"Yes!" and as Harry tossed the disfiguring headgear into a corner Blair and his father gave a simultaneous start.

"And now," continued Harry, choking down his indignation, "have the goodness to leave the premises—at once!"

Blair Welter smiled unpleasantly and motioned his father, who was about speaking, to silence. Knowing nothing of the Nixie's ownership, he had at once concluded that Harry had lost his position on the yacht and accepted a menial position on Gregg Island.

"Perhaps you think we'll leave at your bidding," he said insolently, "but you're a bit mistaken. I

say, Cousin Clarence," raising his voice for the benefit of those outside, "bring two or three of the fellers in, will you? Here's a chap who thinks he's running the Island. He wants taking down a peg!"

Now, a rough-and-tumble fight was not in Harry's line at all. In fact, though quite an athlete for his years, Harry never allowed himself to be drawn into a personal encounter excepting in strict self-defense; and as, at the call, half-a-dozen young fellows of from sixteen to nineteen came flocking in, Harry instinctively stepped back.

All at once he saw, through the window, Tom coming toward the house, bringing the fish he had been dressing at the shore. At his heels followed Don, who had begun to prick up his ears as he neared the house.

"Don! Here, Don!"

The collie made a dash forward and sprung through the open door-way at a bound, evidently uncertain as to what his master might require of him.

"S-s-s-t! S-'ake 'em, boy!"

There was no uncertainty in the matter, now! Turning upon the intruders, Don charged forward with bristling crest and gleaming eyes.

Those nearest the door stood not on the order of their going. Young Goldin led by half a length, which became a full length as, his foot striking an obstruction, he plunged over the basket of champagne. Over young Goldin fell Spoonhigh and De Vere Copleigh in a promiscuous heap!

Welter, Sr., uttering a wild shriek, bolted into Doris' room and pulled the door to behind him!

Welter, Jr., with a face the color of ashes, turned to fly, but Don seized him from behind! One prolonged yell of mingled pain and terror rent the air, and in another instant those outside had a vision of a hatless young man, wearing an abbreviated flannel coat, rushing past like a whirlwind, carrying a canine attachment in the rear!

Luckily the cloth yielded to the strain. Otherwise it is not unlikely that Don's jaws must have been pried apart to effect a separation between man and beast!

Shaking with suppressed laughter, Harry stood at the door and shouted to Don, who came frisking joyously back, bearing in his teeth a goodly section of trouser-cloth, which he dropped triumphantly at his master's feet.

Then Harry turned to the awe-struck group, who, huddled together at a respectful distance, were casting apprehensive glances in the direction of their private stores.

"Now, gentlemen," he said politely, "you are at liberty to guzzle your champagne on any part of the Island you choose, but the present owner of the house here don't propose to have it turned into a tippling-shop. Please bear that in mind. Come, Don."

And calling Don inside, Harry, for the time forgetful that Welter, Sr., was still an inmate of Doris' room, proceeded to make a speedy change of toilet.

Mr. Welter, cautiously protruding his head through the sleeping-room door some ten minutes later, stared and rubbed his eyes. In place of Harry Darrel bare-legged and red-shirted, was the same young fellow wearing immaculate white linen and a well-fitting suit of navy blue, eruptive with brass buttons!

"Ah! I had forgotten you were in there!" said Harry, repressing a smile at Mr. Welter's face of astonishment and dismay. "Come out—Don won't hurt you."

Mr. Welter ventured cautiously forth.

"A—is it possible, Harry," he said, "that you are employed here on Gregg Island? Quite a coincidence, upon my word!"

"I am sailing Doctor Gregg's yacht, if that's what you mean; but—I happen to be the owner of Gregg Island, myself."

"You!" exclaimed Mr. Welter. Why, where on earth did you get money enough to buy this Island with?"

"It was a gift, as it happened. There's the deed, if you doubt my word," Harry returned sharply.

Mr. Welter glanced over the document, which Harry had drawn from the table-drawer. Then he smiled as blandly as he knew how. "This—a—simplifies things very much," he said, clearing his throat and pulling a chair briskly toward the table. "And now look here, Harry. What would you say if I, acting for another party, should offer you five hundred dollars in clean cash for Gregg Island?"

"I should say that you were either a knave or a fool!" returned Harry with perfect composure.

Mr. Welter smiled again, but feebly, this time.

"Ah, you always would have your little joke, my dear boy!" he observed, rubbing his hands together rather uneasily.

"Why, the land, which is half ledge, isn't worth five dollars an acre!" he went on.

"Some New Yorkers paid a thousand dollars for a four-acre island in the Harbor that is all ledge!" was the dry response. And Mr. Welter began to think that he had sadly underestimated Harry Darrel's shrewdness.

"Then figuring on the same basis," said Jabez Welter, laughing pleasantly, "I suppose that you actually think Gregg Island is worth twice as much?"

"No, I don't."

Mr. Welter's spirits began to rise again.

"Well, my dear fellow, let us come to—er—the point without so much haggling. What are your lowest figures for Gregg Island?"

"Twenty-five thousand dollars—to you!"

Mr. Welter gasped, and clutching his wiry hair with both hands, seemed trying to lift himself bodily.

"Twenty-five thousand dollars! Great Scott! What do you take me for?" he exclaimed in a stifled voice.

50

"For the man," answered Harry, suddenly rising, "who only a few weeks ago virtually turned me away from his door! And now I have the pleasure of returning the compliment!"

And before Mr. Welter could fully realize the situation, Harry marched him with gentle firmness into the outside air!

With a terribly crest-fallen look Mr. Jabez Welter took his way to the pier from which the entire party were embarking for the Lorna Doon with their untouched hampers, deciding that the atmosphere of Gregg Island was not suited to picnickers.

Blair had already gone on board and retired to a state-room, where he was reported to be sitting on a pillow.

As Welter, Sr., clambered painfully up the gangway lacder with a funereal expression of face, the pilot, who had been hired for temporary service while the steam-yacht laid in Barmouth Harbor, glanced at Mr. Welter from the wheel-house window.

"Who's the old chap? I didn't notice him coming off," he asked of the sailing-master.

"No wonder, Mr. Marlock," laughed the other;

"he was sea-sick below all the way. That's Mr. Jabez Welter, uncle to our Mr. Goldin, and father of the chap who got his trousers torn. They say old Welter is going to buy Gregg Island, and his errand out here was to look over the premises."

Marlock's bearded face remained unchanged, but his muscular fingers gripped the wheel-spokes as though he would crush them. He said nothing, however; and the yacht, being got under way, steamed back to Barmouth with a very silent and spiritless party on board.

Mr. Welter, leaving his son still in the seclusion of a state-room, stepped ashore to make his way back to the hotel. A heavily-built man in sea-faring attire came limping up behind him.

"Your name is Welter, I believe? Mine is Marlock. I want a little private talk with you about Gregg Island."

CHAPTER XIV.

MARLOCK HAS A DISAGREEABLE SURPRISE.

I MUST BE confessed that Jabez Welter's words had aroused no little excitement in Harry's mind when, later, he began thinking over the curious interview.

Singularly enough, until then he had never thought of the possibility of realizing a snug sum of money by the sale of Gregg Island; yet speculators were buying land all along shore by wholesale, so to speak. Islands in the vicinity of Mount Desert had sold for astonishing prices. Indications seemed to point toward Barmouth as a future rival to Mount Desert.

Even if it were in Doctor Gregg's hands again, Harry was inclined to think that the former's whimsical superstition as to the property would never allow *him* to sell the Island; and after much cogitation Harry, when alone with the Doctor that evening, laid the whole matter before him with his usual frankness.

Doctor Gregg's face took on its most genial smile.

"I might have hoped for such a possibility," he said, "but I certainly never anticipated it. Only, don't be in any hurry. Unless I am greatly mistaken, prices of such property about Barmouth will double in another year. Five thousand dollars is the lowest price I would look at if I were you. I think you may get more."

"But," urged Harry, "it seems like taking just so much money out of your pocket!"

"Why so? My peculiar feeling about my ancestor's prophecy, if nothing else, would have kept me from ever selling the Island; and giving it to you, as I did—why, the fortunes of the Greggs have already taken a turn for the better!"

Harry, who knew nothing of the letter which had so seemed to bring relief to Doctor Gregg's mind, did not of course understand this last remark; but he said he was very, very glad.

The day following, Harry took the Nixie and her two regular passengers ashore, as usual. Doris went her way, leaving the Doctor with Harry on board the yacht alongside the pier.

Doctor Gregg was smoking a meditative cigar under the temporary awning thrown across the main boom. Harry stood near at hand, consulting with Mateo concerning a fresh coat of paint to be applied to the bends.

The Harbor before them presented a pleasing and animated sight. Boat-loads of young people were

being pulled off to the various anchored yachts. The Boston steamer was just disgorging its complement of rather crumpled and sleepy-looking passengers. Hacks and drays were rattling back and forth on the wide main thoroughfare sloping down to the steamer pier. "T" carts and pony phaetons sped hither and thither in various directions.

"Who could have believed that Barmouth would have experienced such a boom?" thoughtfully remarked the Doctor, taking his cigar from his mouth.

"Why, after our ship-building went down," he continued slowly, "the place for a time was literally dead. And now ——"

The Doctor, without finishing, included the Harbor and business thoroughfare in one comprehensive gesture, after which he relapsed into a silence which was suddenly interrupted by the voice of some one who had approached the Nixie during the Doctor's monologue.

"Good-morning, Harry, my dear fellow! How well you are looking, to be sure!"

The speaker was Jabez Welter, Esq., who, in the very shiny suit of broadcloth which had served him for Sunday-best during a decade of years, smilingly approached the rail.

Harry nodded—rather shortly, it must be confessed. Doctor Gregg looked up in quiet amusement. Mr. Welter glanced furtively at the Doctor from the corners of his small eyes and coughed.

"A—could I see you in private, Harry?" he asked blandly. "I want," said Mr. Welter, dropping his voice to a confidential undertone, "to have a little further talk about the Gregg Island business."

"No need of any privacy!" was Harry's response. "Doctor Gregg, this is Mr. Jabez Welter. Whatever you have to say, Mr. Welter, had better be in Doctor Gregg's presence!"

Mr. Welter hesitated. Then, stepping gingerly over the rail, he seated himself on a camp-stool.

"I have heard of Doctor Gregg," he said in a very peculiar tone, and addressed himself directly to Harry.

"Thinking the matter over," he said smoothly, "I feel disposed, Harry, to do a little better than I offered you yesterday."

"What do you call 'a little better?"

"I will give twelve hundred dollars cash for Gregg Island."

Harry glanced at the Doctor, whose face was as inscrutable as that of the Sphinx.

"What under the sun is he so anxious to get hold of Gregg Island for?" was Harry's very natural thought; and immediately following, "I wonder how bad he wants it?"

"You are making foolish talk, Mr. Welter. I would not even look at any smaller sum than six thousand dollars," Harry replied, with apparent unconcern; "and I am saying exactly what I mean."

But to Harry's surprise, no astonished or indignant outburst followed his words. On the contrary, he fancied that a half-triumphant gleam flitted across Mr. Welter's sallow features.

"I will take Gregg Island at your price—six thousand dollars!" said Jabez Welter suddenly. "We can conclude the business in half an hour if you will step up to Lawyer Bates' with me."

"Oh! but don't be so hasty!" began Harry. "I have made no bargain with you——"

"Harry," deliberately interrupted Doctor Gregg, "if you take my advice you'll have no more talk with Mr. Welter. There is something behind all this which neither you nor I understand!"

Jabez Welter's face became almost livid with rage.

"Mind your own affairs, Doctor Gregg!" he savagely exclaimed. "The Island isn't yours!"

"I propose to," was the quiet reply, "and part of my business is to caution Harry, here, against a possible sharper!"

"Ah!" returned Mr. Welter trembling with anger. "You call me a sharper, eh? Very well. I call you a murderer!"

A slight flush crossed Doctor Gregg's cheek, but otherwise he seemed perfectly unmoved. Checking an impetuous outburst from Harry by a gesture, he said very quietly:

"I suppose you have some proof of this very

peculiar charge you have brought against me, Mr. Welter?"

"The man who saw you do the deed is ready to testify against you in court whenever I say the word!" was the reply in tones of malicious triumph. "If you want your secret kept, Doctor Gregg," said Mr. Welter with a peculiar smile, "I think you will find it advisable to use your influence for, instead of against, me in this matter of purchasing Gregg Island."

"Do you, indeed!" returned the Doctor with exasperating coolness. And then his wrath began to rise.

"Why, you—you old black-mailing anatomy in broadcloth!" he exclaimed with sudden choler, "get off this boat before I throw you over the rail!"

At the Doctor's threatening menace Mr. Welter, turning very pale, scrambled to his feet.

"Marlock! Mr. Marlock!" he shouted in a voice of alarm.

"Aye! aye! I'm with you! Don't you be scar't of nobody while Marlock's around!"

And indeed the appearance of the speaker, as he tumbled over the guards of the Lorna Doon, moored directly astern, was belligerent, to say the least.

His brawny breast, half-exposed by the rough woolen shirt thrown open at the neck, displayed the scars of more than one knife-thrust. His sleeves were rolled up in a business-like way and his huge fists were clenched. In short, as one of the rapidly-increasing crowd breathlessly observed, "Marlock was spilin' for a fight."

"What's the row here?" he blusteringly demanded as the by-standers fell back to give him room. "Has that brass-buttoned young kid been abusin' you, Mr. Welter? If he has, I'll hide him out of his boots!"

With one quick spring Harry was over the rail in an instant. Off went his coat and cap; for I am sorry to say Harry had completely lost control of himself and his temper alike.

"Harry! Harry! Come back here!" called Doctor Gregg; but Harry had not the slightest notion of obeying.

Curiously enough, the bellicose Marlock shrank back before the flashing eyes and scientific posturing of the young athlete. And let me say, in passing, that, with the author of "Tom Brown at Rugby," I believe every boy should learn to spar as well as to row or play base-ball. I am not upholding pugilism, which degenerates too often into brutality. Yet I claim that there are occasions when a scientific knowledge of handling one's fists is of inestimable value. And Harry Darrel was no mean opponent.

"Better sing out for the perlice!" suggested a nervous spectator.

"No! Make a ring!" called a more excitable individual, with a vision of a lively "mill" before his eyes.

Man is a fighting animal. In almost every masculine nature more or less of this peculiar passion lies dormant, and it is useless to deny it; and in a moment the two, so seemingly unequally-matched, were standing facing each other in a circle of on-lookers.

Now this was exactly what Harry Darrel wanted, though not exactly for pugilistic reasons.

"Gentlemen," he said, breathing quick and fast, "this man more than twelve years ago was the leader of three or four who murdered the officers of the brig Newton, commanded by my father, Captain Darrel, and escaped in the only boat, leaving my father to go down in his foundering vessel!"

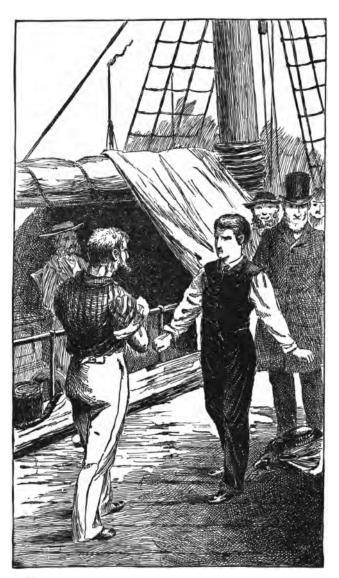
"It's a lie!" hoarsely responded Marlock, drawing back his sledge-hammer fist; "and now I'll make you eat your words!"

But as Harry instinctively threw up his guard an unexpected interruption took place.

"Stand one side an' let me through, you sassy critters!" cried a shrill voice, the sound of which caused Marlock's bloated visage to undergo a singular transformation.

"Oh, Lord! Let me out of this! Keep her back, some one!" he exclaimed in a tone of abjectness contrasting strangely with his accents of a moment before.

But before he could escape a tall, rawboned woman, shrewish of visage and masculine of aspect. forced her way into the ring.



Harry threw off his coat and hat and faced the angry sailor.

In her left hand was a faded cotton umbrella of portentous dimensions. Her right was outstretched in the direction of the unhappy Marlock.

"I've found you at last, hev I, William Marlock?" she exclaimed, seizing him vindictively by the shirt-collar. "Found you after mor'n five years of trapsyin' from one end of the States to 'tother in search of my lawful wedded husban' which basely deserted his sorrowin' wife for to sail as a rovin' sailor on the briny deep? What have you got to say for yerself, hey?"

"Leggo my collar, M'ria!" gasped the wretched man, casting his eyes wildly about him as one seeking for escape, while shouts of approving laughter and ecstatic cries from the by-standers attested to their appreciation of the scene.

"I'll let go of it when I get ready, William Marlock!" returned the female in a higher and shriller key. And administering a shake that made his teeth rattle, she went on, with a reckless disregard of punctuation:

"Lucky for you William Marlock I'm a brokenspirited woman and long-sufferin' or this minnit I'd shake the liver-pin outer your vitals for sech base treatment a sneakin' off like a thief'n the night with twenty-three dollars and forty cents my own hard earn't savin's whilst I was sleepin' like a innercent babe unknowin' of evil for you to go carousin' round the world as shows by a nose the color of a pickled beet and hopin' to disguise yourself by growin' a crop of whiskers like a door-mat!"

Here Mrs. Marlock gave respiration a feeble chance by pausing in her flow of language and thwacking her husband over the head and shoulders with the big umbrella; after which she walked Mr. Marlock away by the ear, to the immeasurable delight of a following crowd.

CHAPTER XV.

THE DOCTOR'S SECRET REVEALED.

DOCTOR GREGG had gone up-town. Mr. Welter had sneaked away. Mateo was Flemish-coiling the halyards on the white deck when Harry, half-amused, half-grave, sprung back over the rail with his coat on his arm.

"I wish you could have fight him; I think you shall beat," said Mateo simply. "Marlock has the *physique* large, and for all that he is lame is a Hercules, or rather a Vulcan; but he has not skill avec les mains, as I see you possess."

"I can box a little. But I should not have lost my temper so; only, when I saw him and thought of my father's fate——"

Harry stopped abruptly, but Mateo understood. "Yes, yes, I see. But Marlock has punishment. Ciel! to have a woman like that for a wife! No wonder he run from her and secrete himself on an island of the sea!"

"I wouldn't have believed that such a blusterer would have been so suddenly cowed," returned Harry, laughing at the remembrance of the ridiculous appearance Marlock had presented while being

led away by the ear like a naughty school-boy. Yet his smile faded as he recalled what had previously passed on the Nixie's deck.

"Mateo, you heard what Welter accused Doctor Gregg of?" he said with an effort.

Mateo nodded gloomily.

" What did it mean?"

"There is not use to conceal longer, I suppose," Mateo said with a sigh. "Marlock—le scolerat!—has told to that man the secret; now all shall be known!" And Mateo related to Harry in substance as follows:

Four years before, Doctor Gregg employed a sailor named Kelly on the Island while he was prosecuting his search for the treasure. Marlock claimed that as the three were exploring the brow of the high bluff on the east side of the Island Kelly became insolent, and losing his temper, Doctor Gregg struck him a blow which knocked him over the cliff into the breakers, fifty feet below. Of course such a catastrophe must be fatal, and Marlock was the witness of the tragedy.

Doctor Gregg was nearly crazy with remorse, yet suffered himself to be persuaded by Marlock to keep the matter quiet. The body never came ashore, and no inquiry was made for the missing man, who had come to Barmouth in a vessel. Marlock kept his own counsel and for a long time things went on as usual, until the latter began to demand

money as the price of his silence. How much he had thus obtained no one excepting himself and Doctor Gregg knew, but Mateo thought it had run into the thousands. This, with his previous losses, had made a hole in the Doctor's income, and, as we have seen, he finally threw off his yoke. In revenge, Marlock had probably told Mr. Welter; and now the story would be spread broadcast.

But do you think it can be true?" asked Harry with a shocked face.

"Doctor Gregg is not one to pay money to keep secret a lie," returned Mateo quietly. "But, listen. There was not the thought of killing in his mind; it was but the hasty temper. Voila tout! He was like a man who deranges himself for a long time, and the great fear was that it should come to the ear of Mademoiselle Doris."

Yes, Harry could readily understand it all. He pitied Doctor Gregg from the depths of his heart; yet, after all, there was the indefinable feeling of half-shrinking from one who has the blood of a fellow-mortal on his hands.

But reverting from the painful subject, Harry began to speculate concerning Mr. Welter's eager desire to purchase Gregg Island. What could it mean? As Doctor Gregg had said, there was, without doubt, something behind that they did not understand. But what? Revolving these perplexing subjects in his mind, Harry left the yacht and walked slowly up from the wharf.

That almost the first person he met after reaching the main street should be Blair Welter was not in itself anything remarkable. Since his introduction into the fashionable life of Barmouth Blair had thrown himself headlong "into the swim"—or so, in imitation of the Anglo-maniacal speech of young Goldin and his set, Blair elegantly expressed himself.

Blair's outer adorning also savored of English affectation, for he wore a suit of loud check, a gumdrop hat, and square-toed shoes. An eyeglass dangled at his button-hole, and he carried by the middle a thick stick with a buck-horn head. His upright collar sawed his ears; his neck-scarf was gorgeous in pattern.

To Harry's amazement Blair not only greeted him with a languid smile, but even extended his hand.

"Le's let by-gones be by-gones, old chap. Life isn't long enough for quarrelin'," he said in what certainly sounded like a friendly voice.

And though Harry affected not to notice the proffered hand, he could not well refuse the offered reconciliation, even while he was secretly doubtful of its sincerity.

Harry was on his way up-town to purchase some stores for the Island. Blair—so he explained—had nothing particular to do, as "the fellers" hadn't shown up since breakfast; so he didn't mind walking up street a short distance in Harry's company.

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Goldin, he fondly imagined that an apology would amply condone his offense of a few days previous.

Doris drew up alongside the pavement where the two were standing. If she saw Blair Welter's uplifted hat she gave no sign; indeed, her dark eyes were persistently fixed in Harry's direction.

Before the latter could speak Blair coolly stepped forward.

"A—Miss Gregg," he said blandly, "I hope you'll excuse the awkward mistake I made the other day. My doosed near-sightedness is always getting me into a scrape, don't you know."

Not a word or look was vouchsafed in reply.

"Will you ride up to the house with me, Harry?"
Doris asked, drawing her dress a little to one side to
make room; and of course Harry acquiesced.

The slight to himself was humiliating enough; but when, in addition, Harry Darrel—"a common sailor," as Blair delighted to call him—was shown such favor, this was gall and wormwood to Blair Welter.

"Putting on airs, eh? Miss Gregg," he sneered coarsely, as Harry took the reins from the young girl's hand. "Never mind; you won't feel so high and mighty when your father is pulled up for murder!" And without waiting to see the effect of his cowardly taunt, Blair turned on his heel and swaggered away.

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"Pulled up for m ---- What did that insolent

- "Guv'nor's trying to buy Gregg Island, ain't he?" was the ingenuous youth's first question after some desultory conversation.
- "Your father has made an offer for it—yes; though I don't understand why he is so anxious."
- "Oh, he's bidding for Goldin," carelessly returned Blair. "Goldin has got an idea that it's just the place for summer cottages, and all that sort of thing. He'd sell it off in lots and make a fair spec out of it, don't you know."

Harry didn't know exactly, yet the explanation seemed reasonable enough, after all.

"Well, I haven't made up my mind to sell—not this year, certainly," he said finally.

Blair seemed about to make some hasty response, but checked himself.

- "All of you intend to stay on the Island till snow flies?" he asked in a seemingly careless tone.
- "Probably; and perhaps Mateo and myself may stay there through the winter."

Blair bit his lip. For some reason best known to himself he was not pleased at the idea; but further remarks were prevented by the appearance of Miss Doris driving a sturdy black pony in a phaeton.

"By jove, she is a pretty girl—reg'lar pocket Venus!" muttered Blair, twitching up his collar and adjusting his eyeglass; for Blair Welter had an excellent opinion of himself. So in view of his personal charms, as also his relationship to young Goldin, he fondly imagined that an apology would amply condone his offense of a few days previous.

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"Pulled up for m ---- What did that insolent

fellow mean, Harry?" exclaimed Doris, crimsoning with indignation.

Harry grew hot and cold by turns. Doris was too clear-witted to be put off with an evasion, and a lie was entirely out of Harry's province; yet how could he tell her the terrible truth!

"Miss Doris," he said at length, in a troubled voice, "I can't answer. It is something you must ask Doctor Gregg about."

Doris regarded her companion with wide-open, astonished eyes. It was evident that she had not the slightest suspicion of the truth. She was bewildered rather than shocked.

"I certainly shall," Doris replied rather emphatically; and Harry, feeling very heavy-hearted, drove on in silence.

Doctor Gregg's cozy, old-fashioned house stood a little back from the main street. With a presentiment of coming evil Harry turned the pony into the drive-way and helped Doris out in front of the veranda.

"Why, what is Mr. Biggs, the policeman, doing here?" exclaimed Doris in tones of surprise.

Mr. Biggs—a tall, soldierly-looking individual—must have had very sharp ears. He touched his helmet and coughed under cover of his white-gloved hand.

"Two parties, which one of 'em is that Marlock your pa had on the Island, spoke to me to wait out

side while they did some business with the Doctor, though what I'm wanted for I haven't no notion whatsomever."

"It's very strange," murmured Doris. "Come, Harry." And entering the wide-open front door, Doris, followed by Harry, made her way unceremoniously to the front room, used by Doctor Gregg as office and study alike.

"So you refuse to use your influence with young Darrel?"

It was Mr. Welter's voice again, and Harry uttered an involuntary exclamation of anger.

"I certainly do," calmly returned Doctor Gregg. Then broke in Marlock's heavier tones:

"Blest if I won't blow the whole bizness. There's a p'liceman waitin' outside, and if you don't agree to come to terms accordin' as my friend here wants I'll have you 'rested for willful murder!"

"Father!" cried Doris excitedly as she threw open the door, which was standing a little ajar, "why do you let him say such things?"

"It is the nature of the beast, dear!" calmly returned Doctor Gregg, drawing her to his side. "He don't dare bite, so he barks instead!"

"You'll find that I can use my teeth!" Marlock muttered vindictively, with a savage glance at Harry, who entered in response to a nod from Doctor Gregg.

"Once for all," impatiently interrupted Mr.

Welter, "will you do as we want you to, or shall I call in the policeman?"

"I'll save you the trouble," was the suave response. Then, raising his voice, the Doctor called:

"Mr. Biggs, please step this way." The blue-coated functionary entered and looked inquiringly from one to the other.

"Now, Marlock," said the Doctor, addressing that bewildered individual, "what about this charge of willful murder you and your confederate here have been threatening me with?"

This was an unexpected turn in affairs! Jabez Welter looked aghast, Marlock dismayed, Harry astounded, and Doris alarmed. Mr. Biggs' face, however, was utterly devoid of expression.

"Are you—er—crazy, Doctor Gregg?" whispered Mr. Welter, in evident agitation.

"Not at all. Go on, Mr. Marlock," calmly returned the Doctor, giving his daughter a reassuring smile.

"It's your own fault if you're hung," growled Marlock, seeing no way out of it. And then, in more extended detail, he told the story of the sailor knocked by Doctor Gregg from the cliff which Mateo had a little before narrated to Harry.

"Father, it is not true!" half-hysterically whispered Doris.

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"Only in part, dear," returned the Doctor soothingly. Then, looking around at the rest, he drew a crumpled letter from his pocket.

"Marlock has told his story," he said, "but he has omitted one or two important details. I did, in the heat of passion, strike Kelly a blow, and being near the edge of the cliff, he lost his footing and—went over. Instead, however, of being drowned, as I was led to believe, he swam through the surf and was picked up by a passing fisherman."

"Thank God!" was the simultaneous exclamation of both Doris and Harry.

"It's an infernal lie!" hoarsely shouted Marlock. Mr. Welter, in a milder form of speech, asserted the same.

But the Doctor, unfolding the letter, read aloud as follows:

Munn's Boarding-House, Boston, March 3.

To WILLIAM MARLOCK:—Don't try to come no monkey bizness with me Bill Marlock or I'll blow the whole thing how you've maid Doctor Gregg think he killed me by knockin' me over the lege when all the while I'm alive and kickin' by reason of bein' pict up by the fishin'-boat Macy and took into Boston. You've been a bleedin' of him ever sence and I haven't had my share reg'lar accordin' to agreement through bein' away to see part of the time. So now you jest raise a hundred and send me rite off or as I say I'll blow the whole biz.

You hear me,
MARTIN J. KELLY.

But before the Doctor finished reading the letter

Marlock and Mr. Jabez Welter had edged out of the room. "The game was up," as the latter sullenly observed, and now some other plan must be got at if the whole thing wasn't to slip through their fingers.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE FORTUNES OF DANIEL PLUNKET ARE FOLLOWED.

A ND NOW I propose for a brief time to leave events to shape themselves as to the future fortunes of the dwellers upon Gregg Island.

Meanwhile let us follow in the wake, so to speak, of the flying thirteen-foot dory which, being towed at the tail of a wounded and wrathful blackfish, is rapidly conveying our friend Dan "to fresh fields and pastures new," if the expression be allowable.

It would have been the easiest thing in the world for Dan to have cut the tangled line between the dory and the blackfish if he had had a knife. Alas! his knife was on Gregg Island. Nor was there in the dory so much as a rusty nail, or anything with which he could chafe through the strands of the tow-line.

"Well, this is —— redikilus!" Dan exclaimed, after a vain search in every pocket for something to serve the above purpose.

"Ridiculous" was hardly the word, though. "Serious" would have been far more appropriate; for the dory, cutting through the long, regular seas, was beginning to take in water over either gunwale

by the bucketful, and Dan had to bale in a lively manner to keep the dory afloat as it went flying to the eastward. There was, as a matter of course, not a morsel of food or a drop of fresh water aboard; and, to judge by then present appearances, the blackfish was calculated to hold out for a run half-way across the Western ocean.

Hour after hour Dan baled and perspired, and wrathfully apostrophized the marine mammal that was thus committing this bold act of kidnaping on the high seas.

"You think you're mighty smart, now don't you?" growled Dan, shaking his fist at the monster, whose glossy black back alternately rose and fell in a smother of foam of its own making as he wallowed and rolled on his billowy track.

But the blackfish seemed to snort contemptuously and plunged onward with unabated speed. The Island diminished to a dim spot in the watery distance, the sun's disk touched the western rim of the sea, and twilight began to fall upon the face of the deep.

A fan-shaped trail of phosphorescent fire marked the dory's wake; and as the speed of the great fish began at last to slacken perceptibly, Dan saw amid the phosphorescence a dozen or more triangular dorsal fins of as many following sharks.

The blood of the wounded blackfish had attracted these vultures of the sea, and a shudder ran

through Dan as he thought how easily one of the huge monsters could upheave and overturn his dory.

But Dan need not have feared. Their anticipated prey was the blackfish, which, badly wounded, was showing signs of rapidly-lessening strength; and suddenly the ocean was churned into a foam of dull fire as the ravenous brutes made a united attack upon the blackfish!

The dory was thrown hither and thither like a cork by the desperate plunges of the mammal in its agonized efforts to escape. Then, all at once, the line slackened. The iron had drawn!

"Well, there's so much to be thankful for!" said Dan, drawing a long breath. Yet the situation was not particularly desirable even then. Like the orator, Dan knew no north, no south, no east, no west. True, the moon was just showing its red face over the edge of the sea, and Dan had a vague idea that the quarter in which it had appeared was the east; also that to row in an opposite direction was the nearest he could come to keeping his dory's head to the westward, where, somewhere, miles and miles away, lay the distant coast-line.

But Dan had an abundance of pluck; so instead of giving up to despair he shipped the oars and gave himself up to pulling. The moon rose higher, and, full-orbed, sent down a sheen of silvery light upon the surface of the sea, which was gradually smoothing itself into calmness.

Until the moon had climbed midway in the arching heavens Dan pulled steadily in as nearly an opposite direction as he could keep without looking over his shoulder—which was perhaps the reason that he did not sooner see a becalmed vessel from which came a hail that caused his heart to give a great leap.

"Halloo! I say. Look out, or you'll run us down!"

Sure enough! Dan's dory was close upon a trimlooking schooner-yacht of some forty tons burden lying totally becalmed. Unshipping the oars, Dan threw the painter to a sailor leaning over the rail, and as the vessel rolled lazily to leeward he clambered aboard by the main chains.

Two persons were standing near the deserted wheel. One was a tall young man with fluffy side-whiskers and solemn aspect. Only for his correct yachting costume and the binoculars in a case at his side, one might have taken him for a theological student or even a newly-fledged rector.

His companion was a sea-farer past middle age, whose hair and beard were plentifully powdered with gray. As Dan looked from one to the other the former was about to speak, when the other prevented him by a gesture.

"If you please, Mr. Dall, I will—er—interrogate the young man," he said, speaking with a slight drawl.

"Very well, Lord Masters," was the brief response; and as the sprig of nobility pulled a copy of "The Yachtsman's Complete Manual" from his pocket, Mr. Dall, who was evidently the sailingmaster, shrugged his shoulders and turned away.

Lord Masters nervously turned over the leaves of the book as though seeking instruction in the unexpected exigency under the head of Rescued Seamen. Evidently failing in this, he pettishly pushed the book back in a side pocket.

"A—well, what have you got to say for yourself?" he finally queried. And Dan told of his involuntary voyage in the dory.

"Sort of Jonah-and-the-whale story, but I suppose we—a—must swallow it," remarked the young Englishman with solemn facetiousness.

"How far off-shore does this Island lie?" suddenly asked Mr. Dall.

Dan told him:

"Barmouth's the nighest sea-board town. Used to be a gre't place for ship-buildin'. Mebbe you've heard of it?"

"Barmouth!" repeated Mr. Dall half-mechanically; and taking off his gold-banded cap, he passed his hand across his forehead as one who tries to recall a long-forgotten memory; after which, without replying, he walked forward.

Lord Masters touched his own forehead with his fingers:

"Poor chap!—always tryin' to remember. Got a clip from a fallin' spar some years ago, I'm told, and everything previous is kind of blank. Splendid sailor-man, though; been with me ever since the Psyche was built."

But Dan was more interested in Lord Masters as the first live nobleman he had ever seen than in Mr. Dall, the Psyche's sailing-master.

No false delicacy stood in his way as to questioning his entertainer concerning such points as his natural curiosity suggested.

Thus he inquired concerning the wealth of an English lord, and how he made his money, anyway. Did he—Lord Masters—have a cas'le of his own or board to Queen Victory's palis in London? Was he a married man? What did the Psyche cost brandnew? And so on.

Lord Masters, languidly amused at Dan's ingenuousness, answered as seemed best to him. He informed Dan, moreover, that the yacht was from London and her destination Mount Desert, where Lord Masters hoped to find a party of friends. Failing in finding them there, he should sail for Boston or New York.

Then the steward was called up, and very soon Dan was satisfying the demands of a remarkably healthy appetite in a luxuriously-appointed cabin whose furnishing and fittings were beyond anything his wildest conceptions had ever pictured. Plate-glass and pictured paneling, velvet upholstering, oil-paintings and bronze statuary were quite out of Dan's line.

"The Pres'dent nor Queen Victory neither ain't got no room fitted up like the Siky's cabin was," Dan is accustomed to say in his oft-repeated description of these splendors. Yet he did not allow his surroundings to materially affect his appetite.

CHAPTER XVII.

DORIS ABDUCTED.

A ND NOW, having relieved my readers' minds of any possible apprehension as to Dan's fate, let me once more return to Gregg Island.

The summer was beginning to draw to its close. Doctor Gregg and Doris had reluctantly commenced to think and talk of returning to the conventionalities of civilized existence—in other words, of going back to town; for there was a charm in their Island life only understood by those who, with an innate love for sea and sea surroundings, have a distaste for the crowded resorts of fashion. The ever-present ocean, in its varied moods and tenses, never tired them. They drank-in renewed health and vigor with every draught of sea-air. The voice of the surf was a melodious lullaby to soothe them to rest.

Particularly did Doris herself enjoy pulling the little Whitehall boat her father had purchased for her that season. Whenever wind, weather and sea permitted, she was accustomed to row boldly out from the little islet into the broad Atlantic—not, of course, venturing any distance from the Island. Perfectly fearless, Doris without the slightest hesi-

tancy often ran alongside the fishermen at anchor or beating past in a light breeze, to many of whom she was known as the Doctor's little girl; and every one had kindly greetings or pleasant words for pretty Doris.

The Nixie had run across to Barmouth as usual, one bright August morning toward the end of the month. Doris had preferred being left behind. She wanted to make the most of her time, so she told Harry, while he and Mateo were getting the yacht under way.

There was a light breeze from the south that just ruffled the surface of the sea, and seemed to whisper to the young girl of the pleasure there would be in a pull over the long, even swells. Just off Inlet Point a small, sharp-nosed fisherman was lying to with the fore-boom guyed out, seemingly "trying" for mackerel, late in the season as it was for this erratic and toothsome fish—which gave Doris an additional excuse for a short cruise in the Whitehall boat.

Telling Tom, who was at work in the garden, where she was going, Doris donned her sailor hat and ran lightly down to the pier. Five minutes later her light boat was rising and falling with the pulsing of the ocean's breast, as, impelled by the light ash oars, it sped steadily on toward the little schooner.

A swarthy fellow, wearing a red skull-cap and

small gold rings in his ears, was looking over the bow. Another man of larger build, with distinctively Spanish features, was smoking a paper cigarette as, standing at the rail, he idly fingered a couple of fish-lines. A third lay extended at full length on the after-house, with his head pillowed on some old sails.

But there was still a fourth person in sight, and this, considerably to Doris' surprise, was a tall, raw-boned female of decidedly masculine presence, wearing a man's straw hat and—to judge by her heavy step as, at the approach of the boat, she walked toward the bulwarks—a pair of the largest sized sea-boots.

The eyes of the three were fixed with something more than common interest on the young girl, who, drawing in the oars, suffered her boat to drift alongside the schooner's hull.

"Ain't that the Doctor's little gal?" inquired the woman.

Doris laughed an acquiescence. The man on the after-house, whose hat was laid over his face as though to shield it from the sun, muttered something in an undertone.

"I'll ask her, William," said the gaunt female loud enough for Doris to hear; "mebbe she will, jes' to accommodate us poor fisher folks. Miss," addressing Doris persuasively, "we can't neither of us handle a pen no ways decent; won't you come

down inter the cabin and write a bit of a letter for my old man, here?"

"Why certainly," returned Doris, though in truth she was a little surprised at the request. But the presence of the woman was of course perfectly assuring in itself, and handing up the painter, Doris climbed lightly aboard by a step-ladder put over the side for her accommodation.

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"What luck have you had this morning?" she asked brightly of the Spanish-visaged fisherman, who was slowly drawing in his lines.

"Buena!—could not ask better luck, Senora," was the reply, accompanied by a most extravagant show of very white teeth—at which Doris vaguely wondered, for she saw no signs of fish about the clean, white deck. But the woman was beckoning her below, and giving the matter no further heed, Doris followed.

"There won't a soul come into the after-cabin besides me, so you needn't be afraid of nothin'," the woman remarked persuasively; but Doris had not thought of such a thing as being afraid, as she told her strange companion.

The cabin was neatly finished in maple and walnut, cleaner and more orderly than might have been looked for, with two curtained berths, a table, and a reclining chair.

"Which is owin' to my husband's takin' me along of him summer fishin'," explained the female. Then muttering something about seeing "what he wanted writ," she climbed heavily on deck.

A sudden noise caused Doris to look up. The after companion-way slide had been pushed into place; not only that, but as, springing up the steps, she beat frantically against it with her small hands, Doris found it fast!

Flying back to the door leading to the outer cabin, Doris discovered, to her dismay, that this was locked!

The glass skylight overhead was open for air, but it was above her reach and grated with iron on the outside; so that Doris found herself a prisoner as far from possibility of aid as though she had been locked in a cell of Sing Sing!

But she was not one to scream, faint, or go into hysterics. What the object of her detention might be, Doris could not dream. Then all at once she heard an unpleasantly familiar voice in exultant tones overhead say:

Neatly done, old gal! Take the wheel, and keep her nor'-east when her head swings off. Run up the jib, Lewy. Get the tackle off the fore-boom, Jack, and jibe it over. Then we'll take the little boat in on deck."

It was Marlock! Good Heavens! And this was the way he was taking to revenge himself on Doctor Gregg!

Half an hour later Mrs. Marlock-for of course it

was that strong-minded female—unlocked the scuttle, and throwing it open, descended again to the cabin.

She had hardened her features as against expected reproach or pleadings, yet neither came.

"What do you intend doing with me?"

The young girl fixed her clear eyes steadily on the woman's unlovely face as she thus asked, without a tremor in her tones.

Mrs. Marlock laughed—partly, perhaps, to cover a flitting sense of shame.

"We don't cal'late to hurt a hair of yer ladyship's purty head; it's too vallyble for that," she replied, dropping heavily upon a stool. Then elevating her voice she called loudly:

"William! William Marlock, I say! Come down here d'rec'ly!"

"Keep her as she goes, Lewy." And a moment later the speaker shuffled below—looking, it must be confessed, a trifle shame-faced, or as much so as it was possible for William Marlock to look.

Doris, resting one small hand on the table, waited quietly for further proceedings; but Marlock, shifting uneasily from one foot to the other, seemed disinclined to speak.

Mrs. Marlock administered a gentle shake by way of a stimulus.

"If you're a man speak up, William Marlock, and say what you've got to," snapped his amiable spouse.

"Well, the fact's just here, Miss Doris," said Marlock, carefully evading the young girl's gaze.

"Your father's turned me off, and in a way you don't know of has been the means of a big moneyloss to me and Mrs. Marlock, here. Desp'ret cases calls for desp'ret remedies, and we've kinder kidnaped you, cal'latin' that your pa'll pay a tidy sum for your ransom after we get things arranged so't we can open negotiations with him. See?"

Doris' pretty face was a perfect study. Anger, incredulity, dismay and contempt, all seemed struggling for the precedence.

"And so you think," she said in a clear voice, "that so bold and barefaced a crime as you purpose can be successfully carried out in these days of detectives, telegraphy and steam?"

Mr. Marlock was understood to mutter that he guessed he'd take the chances. He rather thought he knew what he was about ——

"And if he don't, I do!" sharply interposed his wife.

"Lucky for William he's got some one to plan for him! So now, Miss Doris, you might's well give in to what story-writers call the 'nevitable, for we're bound to have a good pile out of your pa to pay for the resks we're takin', and don't you forget it!"

"But," returned Doris quietly, "my father is anything but a rich man. As your husband knows, he has lost a great deal in searching for the treasure on Gregg Island. Is your idea to strip him of his last dollar?"

Marlock and his wife exchanged glances.

"Well, I guess not," remarked the former. "We ain' callin' for no hundred thousan' dollars; all we want is just a fair share."

"A hundred thousand dollars!" echoed Doris in tones of bewilderment. "Why, what do you mean? My father isn't worth a twentieth part of that sum! You must be crazy!"

"Or drunk," Doris wanted to add, only for its unlady-like sound; for Marlock's bloated visage and a strong smell of spirits in the close cabin were suggestive that he had been resorting to "Dutch courage" as a stimulus to aid in the carrying out of his desperate enterprise.

CHAPTER XVIII.

A TIME OF PERIL!

DORIS sat alone on one of the cushioned lockers trying to think connectedly. What had been meant by the allusion to her father's supposed wealth she could not conceive. Indeed, the statement itself was too absurd to give it further thought.

The only object Doris could imagine to be gained by her retention for a longer or shorter period was the terrible shock and agonizing suspense her disappearance would bring to her father, and this fact itself caused Doris more unhappiness than anything else.

How long it might be before Tom would notice her delay in returning to the Island was a very uncertain matter. Tom was a very good boy as the Portuguese go, but when there was no one to keep him up to his duty he was given to taking long naps in the shade. And then, again, when he discovered her absence, what then? He of course could not know that she had ventured on board the vessel she had spoken of pulling out to, for this was something which she had never before done; so that, on the Nixie's return, Tom would not be able to give any

definite information to lead to Doris' whereabouts. For aught Tom could tell to the contrary, her boat might have been overturned and Doris herself be lying at the bottom of the sea!

"Oh! if Harry and father only knew!" she said over and over again. For Doris had implicit confidence in Harry's judgment and daring, so far beyond that of most young fellows of his age; and she knew that with her father to counsel and advise he would let nothing stand in the way of pursuit and recapture, could he only have the faintest clew to the mystery of her disappearance.

Yet there was nothing for it but a patient waiting for results; and so the long hours wore on. She knew by the clear blue of the cloud flecked sky which she saw through the skylight that it was a perfect summer day; and the easy, lazy motion of the schooner, with an occasional sound of the reef-points pattering sluggishly against the sails, suggested that the wind was very light. Further than this Doris of course knew nothing.

Mrs. Marlock brought in supper, which she had prepared with her own hands in the forward part of the vessel, where the men ate and slept. As may be supposed, Doris had but little appetite. To her questions as to the schooner's destination, or how soon or in what manner her father was to be communicated with, Mrs. Marlock either returned evasive answers or made no reply whatever.

The swinging lamp was lighted, and again Doris found herself alone. She was roused from a fit of anxious musing by the sound of voices overhead. Either the speakers had forgotten that the skylight was open or were careless as to their conversation being overheard.

"I don't like the look of the weather for all the wind's so light," Marlock was saying in surly tones; "and if we do catch one of them smoky sou'-easters, nigh in to the shore as we are, Mrs. Marlock, you'll wish you'd never egged me on to this bit of bizness, which for aught I know'll turn out a hangin' matter!"

Mrs. Marlock was heard to utter a contemptuous sniff.

"For a man that's made his brags of headin' mutinies and doin' all sorts of devlin', you're as big a coward as I ever run afoul of!" she amiably remarked.

"But what is it you have arrange?" The question came from Spanish Jack at the wheel. Evidently he regarded Mrs. Marlock as the head and front of the desperate enterprise.

"Haven't I told you once!" was the sharp response.

"The schooner's chartered for two months. I'm goin' to hev her run up the St. Lawrence to Montreal, where the bank-cashiers and them go so's the law can't reach 'em. No one can touch us in Canadian waters. Then we can make sech terms with the Doctor as we're a mind to!"

"What shall you call terms?" asked Spanish Jack, after a short pause.

"Twenty-five thousan' clean cash and a writin' that, pervided the gal is returned safe and sound, no kind of percedin's in any way, shape or manner is to be brought ag'in' us. You and Lewy there will have a thousand apiece, as we agreed. Then you can go your ways."

"We gets one thousand 'piece; you and Marlock takes all the rest, eh? Pretty good things for you two!" Spanish Jack observed parenthetically.

But ignoring the remark, Mrs. Marlock added:

"The bizness'll all be done through a party outside, who's agreed to do the dickerin' with Doctor Gregg for a reg'lar commission. He won't let on where the gal is till everything is arranged; and the law can't tech him no way, as I see."

"Who shall it be? That old man of the yellow face—Welter, you call him?"

"Never you mind. So you and Lewy get your pay, it's nothin' to you who does the rest of the dirty work!" was the acrid retort.

A low rumble of distant thunder brought the conversation to a close. Mrs. Marlock took the helm, and the schooner, being brought to the wind, was snugly reefed, in readiness for dirty weather; for a summer storm on the New England coast, though of comparatively short duration, is apt to be very lively while it lasts.

Doris said her prayers, as she had done from childhood, and without removing any of her clothing laid down in one of the berths, but not to sleep. Fitful gusts of wind were beginning to whistle through the straining rigging as the vessel's motion increased with the rapidly-rising sea. The timbers beneath her creaked and groaned in a most dismal manner, while louder and deeper came the thunderpeals, following close upon vivid lightning-flashes that filled the little cabin with an unearthly blue glare!

The glass skylight was closed, and presently the rain came dashing down upon it as though the flood-gates of heaven were opened. A furious squall, striking the schooner aback, threw her upon her beam-ends! There were hoarse shouts and cries from the deck, followed by a fierce altercation, in which Mrs. Marlock's voice was the loudest and shrillest. A crack and following crash suggested that one of the masts had been cut or carried away; another followed, and the vessel seemed to right. Then came the clanking of the pump and the steady gush of water, heard even above the wind and sea.

Poor Doris! Her courage, which had hitherto kept good, began to fail. She knew that the vessel must be in imminent danger, and she herself, imprisoned in the cabin, must remain passive—perhaps be left to perish!

"Ah, no! they cannot be so brutal! The woman,

bad as she is, would never consent to such a crime!" murmured Doris, who was clinging to the edge of the berth to prevent being thrown from side to side by the terrible pitching and rolling.

Suddenly the clank of the pumps ceased. A command, in which the one word "boat" was alone distinguishable, reached her ears above the tumult of the elements. At the same moment she heard Mrs. Marlock's shrill voice close to the companionway:

"I say, Bill Marlock, it shan't be! Leave that gal to drown like a rat in a trap? Not if Maria Marlock knows it! You ——"

"You think we put ropes round our necks for you!" yelled Spanish Jack in a fury of excitement, "but you mistake! You boss 'long enough! Some one else have say now! Drag her 'way and chuck her in boat! Only hold four! If we keep 'float in this seaway then, we lucky!"

The noise of a scuffle followed, and then hysteric shrieks from the woman, who was evidently being put into the boat by main force.

"Quick, now! The schooner's goin' deeper every minnit!"

"Marlock! oh, Marlock! don't leave me to die!" cried poor Doris, beating her small clenched fists against the under side of the companion-way slide.

But only the hiss and roar of the waves, the howling of the wind, and the deep diapason of the thun-

der, replied. And Doris, resigning herself to despair, sank down in a corner of the cabin, where, burying her face in the cushion of one of the lockers, she committed her soul to God, and as calmly as she might awaited the end.

CHAPTER XIX.

THE PURSUIT IN THE NIXIE.

NOW TO return to those who were so deeply interested in the welfare of the young girl in such imminent peril. It will be remembered that the Nixie had conveyed Doctor Gregg to Barmouth on the forenoon of the day when Doris pulled off to the fishing-vessel and was inveigled on board by Marlock's wife.

Having left the Doctor as usual, Harry and Mateo, having considerable work to do at the Island, returned as soon as possible; but Tom came rowing out to meet them before the cutter had reached the mouth of the inlet, and said, breathlessly:

"Miss Doris pull out to little fishing-schooner, before dinner, that try for mackerel on east side of the Island. Tom, busy 'bout he work, not notice after that, only that schooner gone. No Miss Doris in sight anywhere. He take glass up on hill—no can see. Where she have gone?"

Thoroughly alarmed at Tom's excited report, Harry and Mateo headed the Nixie round the Island on one side, with instructions to Tom to pull opposite; but, as my readers will understand, the search was vain.

There was only one possible solution of the mystery, for if the boat had by any chance been upset it would have washed ashore. No, it must be that the boat and its mistress had been carried away by the vessel she had spoken of going alongside of. But to what end? And then it was that a dim, half-suspicion of the truth began slowly to dawn upon their minds, especially as Mateo suddenly remembered having heard something said the day before, by the idlers on the pier, to the effect that Marlock must have turned over a new leaf.

"He's chartered the Seaman for two months, so I hear, and is goin' to try shore fishin' with his old woman and a couple of turriners he picked up somewheres," one of the men had said.

"It is Marlock who has carried her off!" exclaimed Harry, as Mateo recalled and related the saying.

But for what? And which way had he sailed?

For revenge, of course. And the answer to the latter question was supplied by the skipper of a lobster-smack whom they fortunately hailed.

"The Seaman? Why, yes; he (the skipper) passed her that forenoon stannin' about nor' nor'-east, like she might 'a' been bound down-shore to jine the mack'ril fleet to the nor'ard of Seguin."

Tom was dispatched to Barmouth in the dory to

notify Doctor Gregg, who could take such measures as he deemed best.

"Tell him we've sailed in pursuit of the Seaman," shouted Harry; and the yacht was squared away to the northward on what seemed an almost hopeless errand, where the chances were so infinitesimally small. Yet something must be done, and this was their only hope of obtaining a clew to the missing girl's fate!

All that afternoon the wind was light and baffling. Toward night it began thickening-up in the south and west. The brig's mainsail was reefed and a storm stay-sail set in place of the large one. Then there was nothing to do but keep on until it became too heavy to run; yet they remembered that a blow would be as adverse for the Seaman as for the Nixie, as both would have to lay to in its height, which occurred a little after midnight. The squall that dismantled the Seaman laid the Nixie on her beam-ends, and only for the great hold upon the water given by her depth and weight of keel she would inevitably have capsized. A center-board "skimming-dish" would have gone down in an instant.

As it was, the rail and three streaks of the cutter's deck were laid under the water for at least five minutes before she righted; and Harry began to think, as, drenched and bare-headed, he hung to the weather-rail, with the sea making a clean sweep over the staunch little craft, while the thunder crashed above them, that the Nixie and her crew were doomed.

But the fury of the gale expended itself in the fierce squall. The wind came round suddenly to the west, the thunder-clouds drove off before them, and the stars began shining out one by one through rifts in the driving murk.

As the sea went down the reefs were shaken out and the Nixie again put on her course—though, as Harry gloomily asserted, it was simply an illustration of searching for the needle in the hay-stack, only a great deal worse.

"Wonder what that big dory do so far from shore—right after blow, too?"

As Mateo thus suddenly exclaimed he extended the glass, which had been pointed at the distant object, to Harry.

"One, two, three, four! And, by Jove! one of them is a woman!" the latter excitedly cried. Curiously enough, no thought that it was the very party whom they were seeking entered the mind of either for the moment.

"Some coaster must have foundered in the squall last night, and those are her people," he continued with considerable excitement. "Trim aft the sheets a bit, Mateo; we must run down and take them aboard."

As, changing her course slightly, the yacht stood toward the dory, which was almost gunwale-deep in

the water, those on board waved their hands with frantic gestures.

All at once Mateo uttered a fierce ejaculation:

"Mille tonerre! It that Marlock, with his old woman and t'other two, but no Miss Doris!"

With a terrible feeling of disappointment and dread, Harry steered straight for the deeply-laden boat. Marlock must of course have seen it was the Nixie and communicated the fact to the rest, and possibly prepared them for any awkward questioning.

"Where is Miss Doris, the Doctor's daughter?"

Hardly had the Nixie rounded to alongside the dory, nearly half-full of water, when Harry shouted the above question.

A look of stolid surprise, or what seemed to be such, appeared on the spray-soaked features of the drenched quartet who one by one managed to scramble in over the Nixie's rail.

"I dun'no what you're drivin' at," returned Marlock between his chattering teeth, "but you can explain later on. For the Lord's sake give us some brandy, if you've got it. Our vessel went down in the blow last night, and we've just managed to keep the dory afloat since!"

Well, they were suffering—especially the woman, whose teeth chattered like one with the ague. There was of course no brandy, but Mateo hurried the men down forward, where coffee was made and the three supplied with such odds and ends of sailor-

apparel as Mateo's clothes-bag could furnish. Mrs. Marlock was sent into the after cabin, with instructions where to find a suit of Doctor Gregg's half-worn apparel, to substitute for her own drenched garments.

Marlock was first to make his appearance on deck. Harry was not surprised that he appeared ill at ease as he came aft, or that he carefully avoided meeting his gaze.

"Now what is it about Doctor Gregg's daughter?" he asked with something of an effort; and Harry bluntly told him his suspicions, as also the grounds for entertaining them.

"Oh, yes!—give a dog a bad name and then hang him!" growled Marlock with a sudden shiver, perhaps owing to his recent chill.

"Then you know nothing of her?" Again the half-shudder.

"No, I don't!" in a loud, angry voice, which must have reached the cabin below, where Mrs. Marlock was attending to her toilet; "and I don't thank you nor no one for picking us up and in the same breath accusing us of kidnaping!"

"I think you're bad enough for that or anything else, Marlock!" was Harry's frank response.

"Ah, maybe you do; but that don't make it so! The Seaman, in the first place, hasn't been within ten miles of Gregg Island since she left Barmouth. We cruised to the north and east altogether—didn't we, Jack?"

This to the Spaniard, who, followed by Lewy, had just emerged from the fore scuttle.

Spanish Jack affirmed the assertion with fluent profanity. So did Lewy, the Malay.

But where was Mateo? Why did he stay below so long? Somehow Harry felt a vague sense of apprehension as he suddenly realized that they two were alone and unarmed in the company of three desperadoes who would be unmoved by any sense of gratitude for their rescue, to say nothing of the bitter enmity the trio must entertain for them.

"Mateo! Come up and relieve me at the wheel, will you?" he called loudly.

"Lewy here'll relieve you," said Marlock with a grim chuckle. "Mateo ain't just in condition to. Hold up your hands!"

To Harry's dismay the last demand was emphasized by the muzzle of a revolver thrust in his face!

Harry hesitated a brief moment, and gathered himself for a spring at the speaker's throat. The wetting would cause the pistol to hang fire ——

"Don't do it! The beauty of a brich-loader is that water don't spile the cartridges, and I'd liefer put a bullet through your head than not!"

The warning probably saved Harry Darrel's life. Another second and he would have flown at his burly adversary with a fierceness born of his anger and the emergency itself. And there is no reason to doubt that Marlock's last remark was perfectly sincere. Indeed, he had gone too far now to let even another life stand in his way.

Grinding his teeth in impotent wrath, Harry submitted for the first time in his hitherto eventful life to have his hands bound behind him. Lewy took the wheel. The three held a muttered consultation, while Harry, in a state of mind not easily described, awaited the outcome.

Suddenly from the after companion-way emerged a figure so strange and grotesque that, despite his distressed frame of mind, Harry felt a hysterical inclination to laugh.

It was Mrs. Marlock, who stood at least six feet one in her stockings, and was proportionately raw-boned, attired in a suit of partly-worn clothing belonging to Doctor Gregg, who was five feet seven and inclined to stoutness!

Mrs. Marlock's lank hair, slightly touched with gray, cut short, like a man's, was surmounted by a venerable plug hat which the Doctor had left behind him. She wore on her feet a pair of stout shoes, displaying quite a section of blue-yarn stockings between them and the bottoms of Doctor Gregg's abbreviated trousers.

Mrs. Marlock's masculine visage was unusually pale. It also wore a look of sullen fierceness, as though she were prepared to resent the outburst of laughter which greeted her appearance.

The sight of Harry sitting near the companionway with bound hands did not seem to surprise the virago.

"Oh, yes, laff; I should think you'd feel like it—the whole bilin' of you!" she snapped. "And you, William Marlock, eggin' of 'em on! I've knowed of men a laffin' with a hangman's rope around their necks! Men that's mutinied on the high seas—yes, and murdered——"

"M'ria!—look out what you're sayin'!" hastily interrupted Marlock with a show of bluster. And it was surprising how suddenly the laughter ceased!

Mrs. Marlock sniffed and looked about her.

"Where's the other one?" she demanded.

"Tied down in for'ard," returned Sparish Jack, shrugging his shoulders; "so no use you talk 'bout no murder!"

Harry felt a sudden sensation of relief at thus hearing of Mateo. A terrible suspicion that he had been put an end to had been haunting him; but Mateo was alive. Surely, the two could escape the clutches of these villains in some way!

Mrs. Marlock took off the plug hat and favored Spanish Jack with a glance under which his bold black eyes dropped.

"No need to, eh?" she said in shrill tones; "no need to!" And then, to Harry's great amazement, this strange woman buried her face shudderingly in her hands!

"Oh, she's crazy—crazy as a coot!" was his thought. "She'd never be mixed up with such a gang, and in such a scrape as this, if she were sane." And, somehow, the reflection softened his heart toward Mrs. Marlock, unwomanly and disagreeable as she seemed to him.

But when, a moment later, she raised her head, no signs of emotion appeared on her sharp features. She spoke seemingly without reference to Harry's presence or anything that had passed:

"Well, William Marlock, what is it you're proposin' now?"

Mr. Marlock scratched his head reflectively. Then he glanced from Spanish Jack to the Malay, who stood at the miniature wheel. Apparently he received no help to the question his glance had half-implied.

CHAPTER XX.

WHAT BEFEL HARRY AND MATEO.

SO, YOU can't tell? Go off at half-cock, git yourselves into a scrape, and then expec' one poor feeble female to git you out! Well, seein', through no blame of mine, I'm nigh as deep in the mud as you be in the mire, this is what you smarties best do, now you've gone in too far to back out!"

Mrs. Marlock stopped short and glanced about the ocean highway. In the distance, Seguin Island, beacon-crowned, rose hill-like from the sparkling blue of the sea. Scattered hither and thither between the yacht itself and the hazy coast-line were the islands, little and great, that follow the New England shore at irregular intervals from Cape Ann to Quoddy Head.

"You pertend amongst other things, William Marlock, to hev been a coast pilot. Likely, then, you know James Island, along shore, where you can leave these two chaps, without danger of 'em starvin', for a week or so, before they're took off by some vessel. Meanwhile we can go som'eres else with the yacht here, which, by what I've heard say, is pervisioned for a tolerable long cruise."

Mrs. Marlock was long-winded, but it was evident from the approving nods given by her hearers that her advice was regarded as good—that is by all but Harry, who quite naturally spoke his mind with great freedom and greater warmth. Hanging was the mildest punishment he predicted as the ultimate ending of this last and crowning criminality—taking possession of Doctor Gregg's yacht by force and arms, and then sailing away in her to parts unknown!

But, as may be expected, his words were wasted on the idle air. Being masters of the situation, his captors could afford to give little heed to his angry speech. Only Mrs. Marlock made brief response:

"They'll be hung, sure enough, every mother's son of 'em, sooner or later—William Marlock with the other two!" she said coolly; "but it won't be for runnin' away with the Doctor's yacht—that ain't no hangin' crime. Some other things is!"

This cheerful prophecy was received in sullen silence. William Marlock, indeed, muttered something about it being as well to be hung for a sheep as a lamb, but subsided under a contemptuous look from his wife. Then he went below and overhauled "Blunt's Coast Pilot" for a few minutes.

How keenly Harry felt the situation need hardly be told. His anxiety as to the fate of Doris was extreme. And now to have the yacht under his charge coolly appropriated by these three scoundrels in broad daylight! It was too bad—too bad! There was really nothing to prevent them from carrying out their purpose. The cutter was staunch enough for a protracted sea voyage, and well provisioned to boot. They could easily run her to the West Indies, or some distant southern port, even, where, by telling some plausible story, they could dispose of her without difficulty, share the proceeds, and go their several ways.

Sailing-vessels were in sight on every hand, but none near enough to be advised of the situation, even if he had any way of making it known. Take it all around, the case looked decidedly hopeless.

Half-a-mile or more astern was a large schooneryacht, under a full cloud of canvas, steering precisely the same course as the Nixie, which had hauled her wind after Marlock's taking charge.

Mrs. Marlock took up the glass and directed it toward the strange sail.

"Keep off a couple of p'ints," she said shortly.

The Malay, glancing back over his shoulder, obeyed. In a moment or two it was evident that the yacht astern had done the same.

Spanish Jack shrugged his shoulders.

"Come up, Marlock," he called; "it looks like we shall be chase!"

Marlock came flying up the companion-way two steps at a time.

"It's one of them English-built yachts. There's

been a fleet of 'em to Mount Desert this season, so I heard. She's only trying our speed."

Yet Marlock evidently felt uneasy as, after changing the cutter's course again, he saw that the following yacht altered her own a second time to correspond.

Sending his wife to the wheel, Marlock, with the assistance of the other two men, set the big racing stay-sail outside the jib; and then the Nixie began to show what she could do in the way of sailing.

The wind was about west-nor'west, steady and strong, as is generally the case in the morning following a thunder-squall on the New England coast. Both yachts were laying a south-west course, bringing the breeze well abeam. The one astern sent up a balloon stay-sail, and the race began in earnest.

A stern chase is proverbially a long one; yet theoretically quite a good deal depends upon the relative sailing qualities of the two vessels.

The cutter was sharper of build and could lay a full half-point nearer the wind than her pursuer. On the other hand the following yacht spread a much greater area of canvas, and very soon it was evident that slowly yet surely she was gaining.

It was now quite late in the afternoon, and both yachts were well to the southward of Seguin light. By the persistency shown by the following one it was quite evident that those on board would not be satisfied till they had won the race—if their purpose in

following so closely at the Nixie's heels was simply to see which of the two was the swifter.

But a guilty conscience makes cowards of us all. Marlock's party had the best of reasons for being apprehensive, and as the following yacht gained steadily, hour by hour, they became seriously alarmed.

"Start the sheets and run her off to lee'ard a bit," growled Marlock. "We'll soon see whether it's only racin' they mean!"

For it was very unlikely that a pleasure-yacht would run out of her course, especially so late in the day, simply for the pleasure of beating another one by a few lengths.

The sheets were eased off and the wheel put up. And now, almost before the wind, the Nixie, with long, irregular rolls, which from time to time sent her boom-end into the boiling surges, went flying like a thing of life to the eastward.

Hardly had this maneuver been executed when the same move was made by those astern. With her great white sails winged out on either side the beautiful yacht came sweeping down in swift pursuit.

Harry, who had been watching it all with many alternations of hope and fear, uttered an exultant exclamation. He now felt positive that the vessel astern contained Doctor Gregg, who, having recognized the Nixie, naturally was bent upon speaking

her; and, to say the least, the Doctor would be curious to learn why she so persistently kept out of the way. Then, too, through a good glass he would easily see that his cutter was in the hands of strangers, even if he did not recognize Marlock's heavily-whiskered face.

"The Doctor's after you!" he exclaimed, out of the fullness of his heart. "Your cruise will be a short one, Mr. Marlock!"

A joyful halloo from beneath the open fore scuttle showed that Mateo, lying there helpless and bound, had heard the announcement; and then, lapsing into patois, the Maltese poured out a torrent of vituperation—fortunately only partially understood by those for whom it was intended.

"The game's up, William Marlock!" grimly observed his wife, as she noted the rapidly-lessening distance between the two flying vessels, "and I don'no's I'm much sorry. Anybody that would leave an innercent gal to drown in a vessel's cabin——"

"Will you hold your tongue, you old fool!" yelled Marlock, as, livid with rage, he thrust his hand inside the breast of his shirt.

"No, William Marlock, I won't!" was the shrill response; but the partial production of Marlock's revolver caused her to change her mind.

Harry, however, had heard enough.

"You cowardly murderer!" he exclaimed in a

CHAPTER XXI.

A COLLISION AND ITS RESULTS.

FOR THAT it was Lord Masters' yacht, my readers will doubtless have guessed.

But who is the pretty, pale young girl, in a gray wrapper several sizes too large for her, whose eager eyes are fixed on the receding skiff? Who but Doris herself, with half-a-dozen handsomely-dressed ladies and gentlemen, en route from Mount Desert to Boston, gathered about her!

"Yes, that was Harry!" she cried, clapping her hands delightedly; "and Mateo is with him! It don't matter about the yacht, if they are safe!"

"Oh, but it does, don't you know," excitedly returned Lord Masters, whose eyeglass kept dropping from its place, as he nervously fluttered the leaves of his "Manual" with a view of finding some sort of precedent for the present unusual state of affairs. "Only," he said with a bewildered air, "I don't understand! What is Harry, as you call him, doin' out there, with the other feller, in that skiff? And who are the fellers runnin' off with your father's yacht? And what does it all mean, anyway?"

Dan knew by intuition, so to speak; nor was he

backward, either, in asking questions or answering them—whether the latter were addressed to himself or not. Luckily, he was a privileged character on board the Psyche, where he was here, there, and everywhere.

"Mean?" responded Dan, who invariably blundered in using Lord Masters' prefix; "why, my lord-ship—that is, your lord—it's as plain's the nose on your face!"

Two or three of the gentlemen smiled secretly, for the organ in question was a prominent feature. Lord Masters rubbed it involuntarily and glanced half-suspiciously at the speaker, who went on:

"Don't you see, they picked up them scallywags that lef' Miss Doris aboard the wreck we took her off'n. Then they turns round, takes charge, and sets Mateo and Harry adrif'. Nothin' very mysterious about that!"

"Well, it's—a—doosid like a novel, don't you know," said Lord Masters; "and now supposin' we overhaul the yacht—what then?"

"We'll board her and take 'em pris'ners, the woman and all," was Dan's confident reply.

Captain Dall had taken no part in the discussion. Standing by the helmsman, he watched the rapidly-decreasing distance between the Psyche's bow and the Nixie's stern.

All at once the drag of the bellying stay-sail snapped the head of the cutter's mast short off

where the bolts to which the halyard blocks were hooked went through.

Down came the great mass of canvas across the forefoot, while simultaneously the brig's mainsail came slattering and clattering down the mast as the Nixie flew suddenly up in the wind, unmindful of her helm.

"Hard down! Hard down! We'll be into her!" yelled Lord Masters, amid a chorus of shrieks from the ladies.

"Hard up!" thundered Captain Dall; but, alas! the helmsman, confused by the conflicting orders, put his wheel the wrong way.

The Nixie, "in stays," was lying broadside on as the Psyche, under full sail, dashed down upon her. Before the wheel could be shifted her sharp bow crashed into the Nixie's side, cutting it through below the water-line as though it had been so much pasteboard!

The Psyche's tapering jib-boom was broken short off in the bowsprit cap. The outer jib was torn into shreds, and the foretop-mast, deprived of its supporting stay, swayed to and fro as the vessel's hull trembled with the shock.

All was confusion for a moment until Captain Dall's voice, above the tumult, restored some slight degree of order. Then the Psyche's pumps were sounded by one of the coolest of the excited crew, while three of the others were getting the boat over the side.

As the heave of the sea sent the Psyche back half her length the wounded cutter heeled, filled, and went down, according to the eye-witness who told me the story, before the boat was fairly clear from the Psyche's side.

Spanish Jack and the Malay were nowhere in sight. They had probably been taken down with the wreckage—at least it was so supposed. Mrs. Marlock, who had previously resumed her feminine apparel, was clinging with one hand to the broken topmast, while the other kept her husband's head above water.

"Easy with him, you fellers!" she panted, as the boat ranged alongside of them; "he's hurt mighty bad. Take him in first; I can look out for myself."

In a very few moments the two were conveyed to the Psyche's deck. Marlock was laid on a mattress in a half-insensible condition. He had been struck by the schooner's stem, and as nearly as could be ascertained was bleeding internally.

By this time the sun had dropped below the rim of the sea and twilight was fast coming on. The yacht was at once put about, and, close-hauled on the wind, began making short tacks back in the direction where the little skiff containing Harry and Mateo had last been seen.

Meanwhile, it was evident that Marlock was dying; and, awed by the terrible tragedy they had just witnessed, there was a strange hush and silence on the yacht's deck.

Grim and gaunt, Mrs. Marlock in her drenched clothing stood with folded arms looking down at her husband, who, having had some brandy forced down his throat, opened his eyes.

They rested on the bronzed and bearded features of Captain Dall, who was bending over him.

A strange expression suddenly appeared on the dying man's face.

"So—you—didn't go down in the brig Newton, after all, Cap'n *Darrel!*" he said hoarsely. "I'm glad of it! I've got sins enough to answer for without that!"

"Who are you?" asked the sailing-master with a sudden start. And again Dan, who was standing nearest him, noticed that singular look as of one who is striving to remember some long-forgotten scene.

"Me? Have you forgot Bill Marlock that you shot in the thigh in the mutiny aboard your brig? I knew you the minute I see you!"

Before the sailing-master could reply, Doris, separating herself from the awe-stricken group near the stern, timidly approached the man who had thus spoken.

As she dropped on her knees at his side he uttered an exclamation that was echoed in a higher key by his wife.

"And you was saved, after all! Thank the Lord!" she exclaimed with a fervor in curious contrast to her usual harsh manner of speech.

"Yes," said Doris softly, "I was saved. Marlock," she went on in a steady voice, "is there anything I can do for you?"

Marlock smiled feebly.

"Well, no, Miss Doris; my game is about up for this world. Yes, though, there is something. Say a bit of a prayer. Not that it will do me any good; only, it looks a bit more—respectable."

It was a trying position for the young and timid girl, but she did not hesitate or falter.

Clasping her small hands, she bowed her head with the simple reverence of childhood. Every hat was off, every head bowed.

"Dear Lord," these were Doris' words, "receive this passing soul. We all need Thy mercy and Thy pardon. Give it even in this, the eleventh hour, to him who perhaps has sore need of such. For Jesus' sake ——"

"Amen!"

The unwonted word, which escaped Marlock's lips in a tremulous whisper, was echoed by those within hearing. Miss Twitter, one of the ladies with sympathetic tendencies, sobbed aloud. Miss Penwick showed symptoms of hysterics and was conveyed below. Mrs. Marlock was the least moved of any present.

"He's gone!" she said briefly; and stooping, she closed her husband's eyes with the same grim composure that had characterized her bearing

throughout. A flag was thrown over the lifeless form, which was placed in one of the quarter-boats until the yacht should reach Barmouth.

It was now dark, and Captain Dall, though silent and absorbed, gave his entire attention to looking out for the skiff containing Harry and Mateo, which, as nearly as he could estimate, must be very near them.

But in vain the yacht stood on and off all that long night, burning port-fires, sending up rockets, blowing horns, and ringing the bell forward. No trace of the cutter's tender could be discovered, and the morning dawned upon a comparatively smooth sea, whose surface was visible for miles around; but the missing boat was nowhere in sight.

CHAPTER XXII.

DORIS IS RESTORED TO HER FATHER.

I T WAS anything but a pleasure-party that assembled on the Psyche's quarter on the following morning as, after several hours of beating to windward, the search for the missing men was reluctantly abandoned.

The memory of the recent tragedy was fresh in the minds of all. The body of one of its victims lie in the quarter-boat, and the more than possibility that Harry and Mateo had gone down in the frail skiff only intended for smooth water cast an additional gloom over them all.

Of course the tender *might* have been picked up by some passing vessel after twilight fell, and while those on board the Psyche were near the scene of disaster; in which case, if on board a coaster or fisherman they would be speedily taken to the nearest sea-board port, from whence they would without doubt at once make their way to Barmouth, for which harbor the Psyche was already headed.

Yet, strangely enough, Doris was the only one of the Psyche's company who seemed to have a full assurance of the safety of the two missing ones. Nor could she give definite reasons therefor. "I know Mateo and Harry Darrel are not drowned," she said quietly as, with Dan at her elbow, she sat quite near the sailing-master, whose grave eyes were bent on the coast-line they were approaching.

"Harry Darrel!" exclaimed the sea-farer. "Darrel! Why, that is my name!"

"Oh! come now, my good fellow," hastily interposed Lord Masters, who had sauntered up in time to hear this singular remark, "your head's botherin' you again. Struck with a spar or somethin' aboard the sinkin' brig he was rescued from a dozen or more years ago," he added in a confidential aside to Doris.

But she paid no heed to Lord Masters' remark; nor did Dan, who was staring at the sailing-master with a face expressive of the wildest and most unbounded amazement.

"Why do they call you 'Captain Dall?" asked Doris, laying her hand on his sleeve to command his attention.

"It seems like a dream," he said slowly; "but after the revelation made last night by the dead man, yonder, a sort of mist has been gradually clearing from my mind. For twelve years my whole past life has been a blank, so to speak—the result, I presume, of the injury Lord Masters has just mentioned. In my delirium I suppose I pronounced my name incoherently, and since then I

have accepted the name of 'Dall' unquestioningly—till now."

"And now," impetuously broke in Dan, "you remember your name is Darrel! D'ever you hear of Barmouth, where we're headin' for? D'ever you know a man by name of Caleb Welter? D'ever you hev a little boy, Henry, whose mother died when he was borned?"

Dan poured out these questions with an eager impetuosity—partly, born of long practice, in the interrogative mood, and, in part, of his excitement at the dramatic possibilities which were slowly revealing themselves.

"Thirteen years ago," returned the sailing-master amid an impressive silence, "I sailed from Barmouth in the brig Newton, owned by Caleb Welter. It all comes to me now as though it were but yesterday! And—the boy! Great Heavens! If living he must be nearly eighteen! Do you know of him, Dan?"

As Captain Darrel asked, he turned with a sudden vehemence contrasting strangely with his usual impassivity.

No one spoke for a moment. Doris' eyes filled with tears. Dan drew his hand across his own and cleared his throat two or three times before he could reply.

"Yes, I knowed him well," he said, gulping down a great lump in his throat. "He was the bes' friend a ignerent greeny from the country ever had. ۳

And—Cap'n, by gosh I hate to tell you, but it's him that was sot adrif' in the tender along of Mateo—your boy; Harry!"

Despite his emotion Dan was conscious of a sort of secret pride at the prominent part he was taking in this romance in real life that, as he afterward asserted, "beat dime novels and sech clean out of sight!"

"And there's more to come yet," said Dan—to himself, however; "only a plaguy sight diff'rent," he added, with a glance of mingled perplexity and pleasure at Doris.

But Captain Darrel, who seemed quite dazed at what he had heard, made no immediate response to Dan's outspoken revelation; nor did his features show the emotion which he felt within.

"Thank you, Dan," he said in a low voice; and turning abruptly, Captain Darrel walked to the bows, where he stood for a long time staring steadfastly at distant headlands and outlying islands of the Barmouth shore.

As may be imagined, there was now abundant material for conversation at the after-end of the yacht. Lord Masters frankly declared that having exhausted almost everything the Old World had to offer in the way of a sensation, he'd managed to find one equal to a three-volume novel from Mudie's in the New. And likewise, in substance, so said they all.

With sparkling eyes Doris pointed out Gregg Island as they sailed past its surf-beaten shores. Through the glass the stone dwelling could be seen, and a solitary form—presumably Tom—in blissful idleness sitting near the open door. She told them the history of the quaint structure and of the happy summer hours spent beneath its roof, and mentioned, incidentally, that a wealthy New Yorker had offered a large sum for the Island, with the purpose of building thereon.

"Good land! Miss Doris; the Doctor don't think of sellin'? Least—that is—he wouldn't advise Harry, who I suppose is, or was, the owner, to sell for no price, I hope?"

Thus Dan suddenly exclaimed, with so much evident dismay that all eyes were directed toward him.

"I think father advised Harry to wait till another year," gently returned Doris, "and then, if he could get eight thousand dollars, to sell."

Dan drew in his breath with a sudden inspiration.

- "Did Marlock know about it?" he asked, with an involuntary glance toward the quarter-boat containing the draped form, where the dead man's wife, refusing all attempts at conversation, had been sitting speechless and immovable since the gray dawn.
- "Yes. For some reason we could not understand, he, with the Mr. Welter who claimed to be acting for some one else, tried almost to force father into influencing Harry to sell." And then, lowering her

voice, Doris related to astonished Dan the story of their accusation against Doctor Gregg and the letter which had established his innocence.

"'Twas me found that letter," said Dan tranquilly. "I left it on the table with a han'ful of old dollars and such that I found in a—a curi's sort of hidin'-place I run across. But we won't talk of it now," he added hastily; "there's time enough when we get back to the Islan'. Look at Cap'n Darrel! Wouldn't you think he'd sailed in and out of Barmouth Harbor all his life?"

For while they had been talking the latter had come aft and silently taken the wheel from one of the crew. The entrance to the Harbor was close at hand; and, the wind being off shore, with an ebb tide, more than ordinary skill was required in working the deep-draught yacht up between the islands and ledges between the Harbor and the sea without.

But Captain Darrel seemed to know every twist and turn of the ship-channel, the depth of water where the buoys lay, and how to take advantage of the eddy-currents between the smaller islands. The memories of his long-forgotten other-day life had indeed returned to him again.

Yet Doris herself was too full of excitement at the prospect of a near meeting with her father to give much heed to aught else; and before the Psyche had reached an anchorage before the busy town a little steam-tug came puffing past from the open sea beyond.

Doris directed one careless glance at the open window of the wheel-house and then gave a little cry.

"There's my father!" she exclaimed, and springing to her feet began waving her handkerchief with convulsive energy.

Well, in another moment the tug ranged skillfully alongside, and with a bound like that of an active boy Doctor Gregg, bare-headed and breathless, sprung aboard and caught his daughter in his arms.

CHAPTER XXIII.

DANIEL PLUNKET ASTONISHES HIS FRIENDS.

THE ATTEMPTED abduction of the Doctor's daughter, the collision and its consequences, and the fact that no news came from the missing men, would have made a nine-days wonder for the Barmouth people, only for a social event which seemed at the time of far more importance.

I refer to the brief stay of Lord Masters and his party of friends, who, finding the place so charming and its society so agreeable, decided to remain there a few days before sailing Bostonward.

There were also certain formalities connected with the loss of the Nixie and its tragic results to be gone through with before the authorities. Marlock was interred at Doctor Gregg's expense. Mrs. Marlock, supplied with a generous gift from the same source, had disappeared as suddenly as she came. Some said she sailed as stewardess of a foreign-bound brig; others that, disguised in masculine attire, she had shipped before the mast in a West Indiaman. But after everything was done and public interest in the matter had subsided, Doctor Gregg, with Doris and Dan, arranged to return to the Island to

"pack up," for the autumn was drawing near when they came back to their Barmouth home.

"It won't seem like the Island without Harry and the Nixie," he told Lord Masters, who had volunteered to have the little party taken off there in his own yacht.

"Harry will come back again, though," said Doris for the fiftieth time at least. And Captain Darrel, who heard it, fervently answered, "God grant it!"

So the Psyche dropped anchor in the little bowlshaped harbor, and Tom was ready with a rapturous greeting at the return of Doris.

Lord Masters was loud in praise of the picturesque beauty of the Island, and the quaint old stone building, with its legendary associations, aroused his highest enthusiasm.

"By jove! I'd like to buy the Island myself, don't you know," he exclaimed; but Dan shook his head.

"The Doctor ain't goin' to let Gregg Island be sold jes' yet awhile—be you, Doctor?"

And Doctor Gregg, with whom Dan was in higher favor than ever, shook his head.

"If Harry is alive, it would be for him to decide—not for me," he replied.

"And he is alive!" Doris again asserted with a cheerful pertinacity that somehow made Lord Masters feel vaguely uncomfortable; for it was plain to one or two persons at least that this wealthy young nobleman had escaped the wiles of match-

making mothers in English society only to fall a victim to the charms of "the Doctor's little girl."

But, happily unconscious of the great honor thus shown her, Doris treated Lord Masters with the same frank courtesy she extended to honest Dan. Indeed, perhaps the latter individual was favored with a larger share of her regard; for was not Dan the friend of Harry? And Harry—well, with a shadowy yet bewitching blush at her own thoughts, Doris decided that he was almost as dear to her as an own brother.

Dan himself seemed to take this as quite a matter of course. In fact, the youth from Wayback was slow to recognize social distinctions in any way. To the horror of some of the Barmouth people, he had been heard to assert that Lord Masters was a brick if he was one of them high-toned critters that's brought up with dukes and markisses, and such; and occasionally he addressed the latter as "Masters" in a very free-and-easy sort of way.

On the day of which I am speaking Dan's manner was characterized by a sort of mysterious solemnity. In silence he waited for Captain Darrel and Lord Masters to finish their inspection of the quaint interior into which they had been ushered.

Lord Masters, adjusting his eyeglass, stared at the wainscoting, the peculiar furnishings with their maritime suggestions, and the great stone fire-place, in bewildered curiosity.

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"And he is alive!" Doris again asserted with a cheerful pertinacity that somehow made Lord Masters feel vaguely uncomfortable; for it was plain to one or two persons at least that this wealthy oung nobleman had escaped the wiles of match-

making mothers in English society only to fall a victim to the charms of "the Doctor's little girl."

But, happily unconscious of the great honor thus shown her, Doris treated Lord Masters with the same frank courtesy she extended to honest Dan. Indeed, perhaps the latter individual was favored with a larger share of her regard; for was not Dan the friend of Harry? And Harry—well, with a shadowy yet bewitching blush at her own thoughts, Doris decided that he was almost as dear to her as an own brother.

Dan himself seemed to take this as quite a matter of course. In fact, the youth from Wayback was slow to recognize social distinctions in any way. To the horror of some of the Earmouth people, he had been heard to assert that Lord Masters was a brick if he was one of them high-toned critters that's brought up with dukes and markisses, and such; and occasionally he addressed the latter as "Masters" in a very free and easy sort of way.

On the day of which I am speaking Dan's manner was characterized by a sort of mysterious schemnity. In silence he waited for Captain Darrel and Lord Masters to finish their inspection of the quaint interior into which they had non using d.

Lord Masters, adjusting me eyeplase, stared at the wainsorting, the poculiar furnishings with their maritime suggestions and the great stone five-place, in bewindered currenty.

"It's ahead of my old cas'le up in Yorkshire—doose take me if it isn't!" he said; and then he read aloud the inscription under the mantel:

Keep Gregg Island Or it Sell, Fortune Never wyth Thee dwel. Gyve Thys Island Out of Hand, Fortune Comes at Thy Comand.

- "Has—a—your ancestor's prophecy come true, Doctor?" he asked laughingly; for he had heard from Doris something regarding it before.
- "To a certain extent, yes," was the Doctor's quiet reply. "Though the fact is," he added rather awkwardly, "some of us have marred our fortunes sadly by wasting time and money searching for a treasure that is probably mythical."
- "Mythy what?" murmured Dan, who seemed waiting impatiently for the Doctor to finish. But no one heeded him, and Doctor Gregg went on:
- "Whether it is a coincidence or not, fortune took an unexpected turn from the very day that I gave Harry the title-deeds of the Island, here—particularly in a certain matter which has made life a burden for some years. And that reminds me, Dan. Where is the hiding-place you told Doris of, where you found the tarnished coins and—a certain letter?"

This was the moment Dan had been waiting for.

Waving the little party aside with a gesture which was almost melodramatic, Dan struck an attitude, and pointing to the hearth-stone with extended forefinger exclaimed;

"Behold it!"

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The effect was somewhat marred by a stifled laugh from Doris, echoed by a chuckle from Doctor Gregg. But unmindful of this, as of the amused glances exchanged between Lord Masters and Captain Darrel, Dan seized the poker, and using it as a pry, lifted the stone slab.

Then it was that amusement was changed to a general exclamation of surprise as, having lighted a couple of candles, Dan descended the steps, motioning the others to follow.

"I never dreamed there was anything like a cellar to the old house," said Doctor Gregg in tones of amazement, as, reaching the floor beneath, they looked around at the stony walls made visible by the light of the candles which Dan silently held above his head.

Doris shivered and clung a little closer to her father's arm.

- "It is like a dungeon," she said in a low tone.
- "More like a wine-cellar," suggested Lord Masters. But Dan's trump card was yet to be played.
- "You ain't seen nothin' yet," he remarked, with the same mysterious air. Advancing to the closet as he spoke, Dan gave a pull at the shelving, and lo! the wood-work swung back. Before the astonished eyes of the group was a fissure in the side of the rocky wall which had been enlarged and roughly squared by the hand of man.

"Well, by jove!" exclaimed Lord Masters. "Is er—this the kind of surprises you're accustomed to spring on us unsuspectin' foreigners, Doctor Gregg?"

But the Doctor was speechless, as, indeed, were his daughter and Captain Darrel. As the former afterward said, words were entirely too feeble to convey his sense of astonishment.

Following their silently triumphant guide, the party found themselves in a most remarkable cavern or grotto. You perhaps have seen in the collection of some mineralogist one of those irregular-shaped stones of a reddish granite which, being broken, discloses a semicircular interior studded with dully-iridescent crystals?

Such, on a larger scale, was this peculiar grotto. It was some fifty feet in extent, in shape not unlike a gigantic inverted bowl, arching down to a foundation of what seemed to be composed of sand mingled with the pulverized fragments of the spar and crystals with which the top and sides were thickly studded.

Irregular seams overhead suggested that air was admitted through them from the outside, for the atmosphere of the cavern was perfectly dry; nor were there the traces of moisture so generally noticeable. As Doris gazed about her in awe-struck silence she half expected to see ranged against the walls iron or brass-bound coffers, which, being opened, would prove to be filled with gold and jewels.

Nothing of the kind was visible, however; only, at the further extremity was an altar-like structure some four feet square, over which was thrown the remains of an old tarpaulin.

"Come along this way, all of you," said Dan, as, breaking the silence, he strode forward.

No one spoke. Doctor Gregg, who was quite pale with excitement, was first at the side of Dan, who, setting down the candles, drew a long breath.

"The coins and the letter was in a box atop of this," he said, laying his hand upon the tarpaulin. "And what's under it——"

Here Dan stopped, gently waving back Doctor Gregg, who was about to impetuously pull away the covering.

"Jes' a minute, Doctor! I don't want you to go to settin' your expectations up; for, as I was goin' to say, what's under here is maybe only worth its weight in old—old metal," said Dan, hesitating for a word. "When I found it," he went on, with inward delight at the eagerness with which his hearers listened, "I was all worked up by not bein' able to tell, for the life of me——"

"Good Heavens! Cut it short, Dan!" irascibly interrupted Doctor Gregg. And without waiting for the clipping process in question Doctor Gregg excitedly "yanked" away the old tarpaulin.

Before them was a symmetrical pile of what at first sight appeared to be bricks of dull red clay;

only, clay does not admit of tarnish or verdigris, traces of which were visible on the oblong objects. Doctor Gregg seized one of the topmost.

"Copper, by thunder!" he exclaimed, his disappointment suggesting the explosive ending.

"That's exactly what I was afraid of," responded Dan hesitatingly; "but for all that, somehow I ——"

Without finishing his remark Dan fixed his eyes anxiously on Captain Darrel, who, having himself lifted one of the metallic bricks, scratched the surface deeply with his knife and held it near the flame of the candle. Through the dull red a thread of pure white was discernible.

"You are mistaken, Doctor Gregg," he said quietly. "These are bricks of pure silver lightly coated with copper. I once saw nearly half-a-ton of such in the hold of a Chinese treasure-junk bound from Shanghai to the Royal Mint at Nankin. They are coated thus as a blind in case of capture by pirates!"

And then Doris began to vaguely comprehend what Marlock had meant by speaking of Doctor Gregg's great wealth. He naturally supposed, from the fact that Doctor Gregg had Kelly's letter in his possession, that he had discovered the treasure as well!

CHAPTER XXIV.

ON BOARD A WHALER.

JANUARY, eighteen hundred and eighty-odd. Six months since the tragedy of the cutter Nixie took place. Six months since Captain Darrel said good-by to the schooner-yacht Psyche and took up his abode on Gregg Island with only Portuguese Tom for a companion. For Captain Darrel has become enthused with the firm, unwavering spirit of hopefulness which has led Doctor Gregg's Doris to maintain, in the face of disheartening evidence, that Harry, his lost boy, would surely come back.

And it is the Captain's fancy that he shall some day see the sail which brings him to port speeding past the Island into Barmouth Harbor. That he—Harry—may return, if he comes at all, by the more prosaic aid of the railway does not seem to have entered Captain Darrel's calculations.

Aside, however, from this fancy of his is the fact that he has a comfortable home thus provided for him; and as Captain Darrel's means are sorely straitened, this of itself is an important consideration. The isolation he cares nothing whatever for. Doctor Gregg's thoughtfulness has provided him With sparkling eyes Doris pointed out Gregg Island as they sailed past its surf-beaten shores. Through the glass the stone dwelling could be seen, and a solitary form—presumably Tom—in blissful idleness sitting near the open door. She told them the history of the quaint structure and of the happy summer hours spent beneath its roof, and mentioned, incidentally, that a wealthy New Yorker had offered a large sum for the Island, with the purpose of building thereon.

"Good land! Miss Doris; the Doctor don't think of sellin'? Least—that is—he wouldn't advise Harry, who I suppose is, or was, the owner, to sell for no price, I hope?"

Thus Dan suddenly exclaimed, with so much evident dismay that all eyes were directed toward him.

"I think father advised Harry to wait till another year," gently returned Doris, "and then, if he could get eight thousand dollars, to sell."

Dan drew in his breath with a sudden inspiration.

- "Did Marlock know about it?" he asked, with an involuntary glance toward the quarter-boat containing the draped form, where the dead man's wife, refusing all attempts at conversation, had been sitting speechless and immovable since the gray dawn.
- "Yes. For some reason we could not understand, he, with the Mr. Welter who claimed to be acting for some one else, tried almost to force father into influencing Harry to sell." And then, lowering her

Bedford, New London or Nantucket wharves are such nowadays seen, and but few in number at that.

This one, the Dryden, was built nearly seventy years ago—in the days when a four-hundred-ton ship was looked upon with the same mild surprise with which we of the present generation regard one of four thousand tons! Her bows were as bluff as those of a Dutch galiot—rounding like the cheeks of an apple, from the bends downward. This you could see as the combined rise and roll of the long, greasy swells hove her forefoot out of water from time to time.

The battered hull was half an inch thick with coal-tar. The bulwarks were so high that only a tall man could successfully look over them. The main-deck was protected by oil-soaked sheathing hacked and chipped with the edges of hundreds of sharp blubber-spades. On either side of the gangway were piled immense sheets of unctuous blubber, from which the oil perpetually exuded in the heat of the tropical sun.

The afternoon watch, divided into gangs, were cutting the blubber into "horse-pieces" and mincing it into "leaves" for the two great kettles of the brick try-works built forward of the foremast. These were presided over by a couple of grimy boat-steerers naked to the waist, bare-headed and bare-footed. The oil when tried-out was baled into

a "cooler," and thence run into the casks in the hold by means of a long rubber hose.

Clothing aboard a whaler is at a discount in these latitudes, particularly during the "cutting-in" of a whale, when everything reeks with oil. The most expensively attired of the Dryden's crew only boasted a greasy dungaree jumper in addition to overalls of the same; and, run through a wringer, he would have yielded at least a half a gallon of pure sperm.

Various nationalities were represented on the busy deck—a hook-nosed Frenchman, a couple of Swedes, a warm-haired Hibernian, a thickset York-shireman, a Maltese, and one American, whose name was Harry Darrel. The Maltese was our friend Mateo.

I regret to say that Harry Darrel not only looked but felt in a frame of mind best described by the word "savage." Yet while I am far from trying to excuse him, there were reasonable grounds for such a mental state.

I do not refer to the exhausting labor of the past four days, which of itself is enough to irritate soul and body to the verge of human endurance, nor to his uncongenial companions, with whom he could not and would not affiliate, thereby drawing upon himself their openly expressed dislike.

No!—these only had their several shares in adding to Harry's then present unpleasant mood. The main cause of it all was Captain Bulger, master of the Dryden.

He was a burly, red-faced man, with stubbly hair, a low forehead, and small, evil-looking eyes, with a record as a successful whaler, a fairly good seaman, and the biggest bully and brute who ever abused a crew of cowering foreigners!

Captain Bulger, with his hands in his pockets and a scowl on his hard, mahogany-colored visage, stood overlooking the work going on on deck.

Harry's occupation would not be called a particularly pleasing one under any circumstances. It was that of scooping from the deck sheathing the mixture of oil, bits of scrap and fat which continually accumulate, into buckets, which are emptied from time to time into the try-kettles.

When pursued under a burning tropical sun, on a slippery, heaving deck, in an atmosphere of stifling, sooty smoke blown from the try-work fires, the occupation in question is disagreeable beyond description.

"Now, then, you Harry—no shirkin'! None of your gentleman airs aboard the Dryden!" For Captain Bulger regarded Harry with small favor, as we shall see.

Harry choked down certain bitter words and went on with his work. Thus far during the voyage, unwittingly and unwillingly taken, Harry had endured the petty tyrannies and coarse verbal abuse which had fallen to his lot, knowing that this is a sailor's portion. Mateo had counseled him to this end.

"If he strike you ever, though," said Mateo between his teeth, "Cap'n Bulger better look out for heself!"

But as yet Captain Bulger, whose kicks and blows were freely distributed among the foreign element on board, had never yet lifted foot or hand against either of the two. Perhaps the dangerous gleam in the eye of the powerful Maltese sailor brought out by his mere verbal abuse had something to do with this.

It was the first whale taken after weeks of weary cruising in the South Pacific; and, as far as he was concerned, Harry resolved it should be his last. The sailorizing part was bad enough; but to exist in a state of chronic grease like an old lamp-wick—that was simply unendurable.

Captain Bulger went forward to shout directions down the open hatch relating to proper stowage of the grand-tier casks into which the first "catch" of oil was being run. A lazy roll of the bark threw Harry against him with considerable force.

"What are you trying to do, you infernal lubber!" roared Captain Bulger, not sorry of an excuse for the sudden resounding slap which he dealt Harry full in the face.

Well, I have no excuse to offer for my hero;

but he was very human, like the rest of us, and his long-pent-up wrath literally descended upon Captain Bulger's head (also neck and shoulders) in the shape of the contents of a deck bucket three quarters full of the oily compound scraped from the deck sheathing!

Blinded, half-smothered, gasping and choking by reason of the unctuous compound, Captain Bulger's foot slipped, and away he went to leeward, oversetting a couple of buckets of oil in his progress!

The watch on deck stood aghast! Mr. Reardon, the second mate, dodged behind the try-works and laughed in silent suffocation till he was purple! Mateo grinned and moved toward Harry, who, somewhat dismayed at the consequences of his impulsive act, had dropped the empty bucket and, instinctively snatching a capstan-bar from the rack, retreated to the topgallant, followed by Mateo, who had armed himself in the same manner.

Captain Bulger, regaining his feet and his breath, scooped the oil from his eyes and bellowed profanely for the steward to bring his revolver, also the irons! The colored gentleman, who held Captain Bulger in great awe, obeyed with extreme alacrity.

"Mr. Reardon! Where the blazes are you? Mutiny goin' on right under your nose and you hangin' back of the try-works! Put those two scoundrels in irons, and shove 'em down in the lazaret! Give 'em bread an' ——"

A double splash over the bow arrested Captain Bulger's tirade.

The second mate looked over the bulwarks.

"They've jumped overboard, sir!" said Mr. Reardon in a matter-of-fact tone. "Shall I lower for 'em?"

"Lower! Yes, of course!" shrieked Captain Bulger, springing on the rail. "D'ye think we can afford to have two spare han's eat by the sharks and no chance of shippin' men this side of Friendly Islands? Clear away the starboard boat! No! Great Scott! Hold on all!"

The cause of this sudden change in the programme was quickly apparent. Over the smooth swells was gliding a war canoe of the largest size, manned by some sixty stalwart natives.

And as Captain Bulger, at the sight, stood staring in ludicrous dismay, the course of the canoe was suddenly changed, and it headed toward the bark; but only, as Captain Bulger said with a relief too great for utterance, to pick up and pull in Mateo and Harry, who were swimming toward it. Then, at a signal from the helmsman, the canoe's prow swung round to the northward, and the rythmic plash of sixty broad-bladed paddles sent it forward on its original course.

The distance between the canoe and the whaler rapidly increased, and the former was soon lost to view.

Captain Bulger smiled grimly as he stepped down from the rail.

"Them niggers'll have baked white man for supper to-morrer night, Mr. Reardon," he humorously remarked; "for if I ain't mightily mistaken that's a Walumba Island canoe, and the Walumbas is cannibals from the word go!"

CHAPTER XXV.

THE "KING OF THE CANNIBAL ISLANDS."

T WAS the merest impulse that had led Harry, ▲ at the sight of the canoe crossing the Dryden's bow a couple of cables' length distant, to jump over and strike out in that direction. Mateo had followed as a matter of course. Where Harry went, like Mary's little lamb Mateo was sure to go. But ten minutes later, both were decidedly inclined to think they had been something more than hasty; for, once pulled aboard the canoe, the appearance of their rescuers or captors, whichever they might prove to be, was anything but reassuring. Tall, muscular, and naked to the waist, every man of them had his front teeth filed to a point and his bushy wool braided in little tails, which added to the grotesqueness of their personal appearance; and one, who appeared to be in authority, wore about his brawny neck a necklace which itself was unpleasantly suggestive, for it was composed of human teethmolars, bicuspids, eye and wisdom-teeth-all arranged with pleasing regularity and artistic taste.

This gentleman, whose smile, as he conducted the rescued aft, had a very shark-like semblance, called

their attention to a raised platform behind which stood the native helmsman.

Upon a pile of mats an individual wearing the simple white linen shirt and trousers of the semicivilized tropical island dwellers was extended. A straw hat was laid lightly above his face, and at his elbow stood a square case-bottle marked "Geneva."

"Great chief—Powana. Him sleep! Bimeby wake," grunted the necklaced gentleman, who seemed quite proud of his familiarity with the English tongue; and leaving the two to their own devices, he withdrew to the bow, where he seemed to be keeping a sort of lookout.

Mateo shook his head dubiously as, having stripped off and wrung out their soaked "jumpers," the two laid them in the sun to dry. The air was warm and languorous, so neither suffered the slightest inconvenience from their recent ducking.

"Don't like looks these fellers," said Mateo with a glance at the broad bronzed backs of the crew, who were bending to their paddles with renewed energy. "Them tooth file sharp, too much like cannibal I see on New Guinea!"

"That would be 'out of the frying-pan into the fire' with a vengeance," returned Harry with a rather sickly smile as he looked involuntarily back at the receding bark they had so suddenly and unceremoniously abandoned.

Before Mateo could respond the recumbent chief

suddenly yawned and raised himself on his elbow. The straw hat falling off disclosed a dark face; but, unlike the natives, Chief Powana wore a short reddish beard, while his hair, of the same hue, was thick and stubbly.

"I wonder if Powana knows any English?" was Harry's mental query. It would appear not only that he did, but also had been listening instead of sleeping, as they had supposed; for a rather humorous twinkle appeared in his chiefly eyes as, raising himself to a sitting posture, he said.

"It's mistaken the both of yez are! My people here haven't done anythin' in the cannible line since Father Terence Flynn was missionary to the Islan', it's now eleven year come May!"

Harry's astonishment at this unexpected outburst can better be imagined than described. But Mateo, who had seen many queer things in his day, only sat still and eyed the speaker intently.

"You' face change in twenty years; so mine," he suddenly said; "but you' voice soun' like Pat Riley, my shipmate in brig Adanthus, way back eighteen sixty. You remember Matt?"

"Remember him? By the powers, why wouldn't I! Didn't he go over afther me from the foreyard in a livin' gale of wind and hould me up till the boat reached us! Matt—Maltese Matt, we called yez—give us yer hand!"

And to the manifest astonishment of the war

canoe's crew, their chief, uttering a wild whoop, nearly shook the sailor's arm off in the exuberance of his joy.

After which Mr. Riley reached for the Geneva, and proffered the same to Mateo, who, sailor-like, could not refuse. But Harry shook his head.

"None for me, thanks," he said briefly.

"Right you are, me lad. Stick to that same sayin' your life through, and I'll drink your share meself!" which the chief did with evident ease and perfect readiness.

Mr. Riley's story was one which has been duplicated a dozen times at least. A runaway on a Pacific Island, he had found favor with the chief's daughter, married her, and succeeded to her father's position at the latter's decease; and for eighteen years, as Powana, or "the bearded one," the exmariner had reigned on one of the most fertile and beautiful of the Walumba group, a literal "monarch of all he surveyed."

"And now, how came a sailor like you, Matt, to ship aboard a dirty blubber-hunter?" inquired Riley, after a mutual exchange of other explanations.

"Harry and me get adrift in small boat off New England coast. Dark come on. Whale bark bound out run us down. We both take aboard. Captain have sail short-handed and make us stay. Will not put us 'board no vessel—noting. We come round Cape Good Hope—no chance run away. See big

cance—Harry jump first, then I. That's 'bout all."

It will be noticed that Mateo did not think it necessary to go into details. Nor did it matter.

Mr. Riley was not in the least inquisitive. The explanation was more than sufficient.

"Right you were, the both. I'd take my chances any day with cannibles before stayin' aboard a dirty whaler wid hard work, poor grub, and findin' yourselves in debt to the ship at the end of a three years' cruise!"

Thus said Mr. Riley, who seemed more than overjoyed at this meeting with those of his own color. An occasional European trader touched at the Island, and that was all his way of knowing what went on in the civilized world. But he frankly confessed that this was a matter of perfect indifference to him.

"Little Walumba Island is too nigh a Paradise that a man should want anything beyond it," Mr. Riley remarked casually, "and you'll say so your own selves when we get there."

It seemed that the chief had been on a visit of state to the ruler of a neighboring group a couple of hundred miles away. It is highly probable that the "Geneva," of which, I am sorry to say, Mr. Riley frankly admitted there had been a dozen bottles at the beginning of the return vogage—was a present of policy from the regent in question. Indeed, Riley hinted as much.

"I've done my best to finish it before I get back,

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though," he said with an expressive wink, "for Father Terence comes down on me sharp whin, now and ag'in, I have a dhrap from a thrader. And my little girl—God bless her!—she don't think it's the thing at all."

"His little girl!" The expression suddenly sent Harry's thoughts over thousands of miles of ocean. Should he ever see the Island-home, the Doctor, and "the doctor's little girl" again? And they, doubtless, thought of him as dead. Dan, too—where was poor Dan? When ——

Mateo's voice addressing Riley aroused him from his train of thought.

"You are the family man then, Pat?" he asked, with a lamentable absence of any recognition of the "divinity which doth hedge about a king." Think of addressing a monarch as "Pat!"

A shade passed over the sun-browned face of the ex-sailor.

"No," he replied half sadly, "my little girl's mother—rest her sowl!—died when Luva was born. I'm alone in the world, only for Luva."

Riley had a couple of changes of clothing similar to that he himself wore, which he at once forced upon Harry and Mateo. There was taro, cassava and bread-fruit in abundance. Fish fresh from the sea were baked over the coals in a clay pan forward. Water in porous jars, with the unfermented juice of the palm, supplied their thirst. By day they re-

clined and at night slept on the softest of grass mats.

So a day and a night passed; and then on the glittering sheen of the far-reaching sea appeared a distant speck which grew into a gem—an emerald in a setting of silver.

Lofty, and clad in verdure of the most vivid hues, Little Walumba rose from the bluest of seas, begirt by a circling coral-reef against which the breakers, feather white, chafed and beat continuously.

Through an opening in the reef the canoe passed swiftly into a lagoon whose placid surface reflected with mirror-like fidelity the wooded shores. As the canoe grated on the coral beach a throng of dusky natives of both sexes came crowding down with joyous cries of welcome; and foremost among them was a tall, slender girl of such surprising beauty that Harry could hardly take his eyes from her. As she flew into the embrace of the returned chief the latter smiled proudly:

"Gintlemen," he said, turning to the two Europeans, "this is Luva, my little girl. How's this for a mixture of the Emerald Isle and the islands of the South Pacific?"

CHAPTER XXVI.

A LOVE EPISODE.

UVA had the melting black eyes and creamy brunette complexion one sees among the beautiful quadroon girls of Louisiana, with a wonderful wealth of soft jet-black hair flowing unconfined far below her shapely waist.

Her attire, like that of all the island girls, was a simple print robe not unlike—so I have been given to understand by Harry—the so-called Mother Hubbard of our own land; but frills and furbelows, corsets, and similar devices, had no place in the primitive wardrobes of the Walumba Island belles.

"You are welcome," said Luva. And her shy smile disclosed small, white, even teeth that would arouse envy in the heart of a city lady, while the slender brown hand which she extended in turn to Harry and Mateo was small and well formed.

"Ma foi, but she is charming!" muttered the usually impassive Mateo. And to Harry it seemed as though the bronzed sailor held Luva's hand a moment longer than was absolutely necessary.

A rosy-cheeked middle-aged man, wearing a priestly cassock sadly patched and darned, now

came forward to meet the little party—the Father Terence of whom Riley had spoken. His greeting was more than cordial as Riley briefly explained the circumstances leading to their unexpected presence on the far-away island; and, talking volubly, he led the way up from the beach, along a wide, well-beaten wood-path under a wonderful growth of tropical verdure, to the village itself.

And picturesque indeed was this collection of brown, palm-thatched huts, each of which had its little inclosure of sugar-cane, taro, sweet-potato, or other vegetable; for the entire village was overshaded by a dense grove of wild fig, giant ferns, and an abundant growth of banana and bread-fruit trees.

In the largest and most central of the neatly-constructed dwellings lived Luva and her father. Next them dwelt the good priest in a comfortable structure which had once been sacred to the idolatrous practices of the islanders. But Father Terence had won the easily-led people away from these and the cannibalistic rites of a quarter of a century earlier. It is true, the more warlike among them still retained an unpleasant custom of decorating themselves with the teeth of enemies slain in battle, but this little weakness may be pardoned the Walumbas in view of their many virtues.

At the end of a week Harry was fain to confess that Riley had not overstated it in calling Walumba an approach to a Paradise—meaning, of course, a Paradise for such people as have no desires or ambitions beyond living for a pleasure-bearing present.

Mr. Riley himself seemed perfectly content with this far niente sort of life, which must have been in strong contrast with his previous knockabout existence as a sailor. Well, this is not strange. Lying within a few degrees of the equator, the climate of Walumba was as nearly perfect as can be found in any quarter of the globe. The rainy season lasts about two months, with a semi-occasional hurricane to clear the air. The rest of the year it is perpetual summer.

Regarded by the primitive people with both veneration and affection, Mr. Riley's will was law among them. He had no need of wealth; every want was easily satisfied. His daughter adored him, while Father Terence was his valued companion and counselor. In truth, the words of a once popular though by no means refined song were in a sense applicable to the chief Powana:

Is this Mr. Riley, can anyone tell?
Is this Mr. Riley, or is it a sell?
If it is Mr. Riley they spoke of so highly,
Why, hang it! Dan Riley, you're doing quite well!

Well, for a few days Harry gave himself completely up to the sensuous lotus-eating atmosphere of the beautiful island. In the cool of the morning he and Luva paddled out on the smooth lagoon and caught bright-hued fish that, with vegetables and fruit, formed their simple meals. As the sun got higher it was pleasant to stroll through the woodpaths of the dense jungle where birds, insects and butterflies of gorgeous tints and coloring flashed through the masses of flowering vines and all manner of wonderful parasitic growth.

Then at midday, as the heat grew more intense, what so delightful as to recline drowsily in a grass hammock under the shade of a far-spreading wild fig—especially when, a little way distant, a young and beautiful girl languidly swings to and fro, listening with rapt attention to the accounts of a world of which she knows so little?

Yet Luva was by no means uncultivated, much less illiterate. Thanks to Father Terence's careful instructions, she had the rudiments of an ordinary common-school education. Luva wrote legibly and read fluently in the breviary, which, with a book or two of devotions, comprised the good priest's library.

Her bearing toward Harry, as the days went on, was characterized by a sort of frank intimacy such as might be shown by a sister toward a brother; but with Mateo Luva was singularly shy and reserved—a fact which caused that honest sailor many an hour of heart-ache; for, though this is anything but a love-story, such things seem in some unavoidable way to form a part of the varied experiences

of almost every life. And so it was that Mateo, middle-aged, and, as he told himself, "a grizzled gray-beard," had fallen desperately in love with Luva.

Now, human nature is proverbially weak; and though Harry would hardly admit the fact, even to his inner consciousness, I fear that he regarded Luva's plainly-shown preference for himself with a trifle of self-complacency. Yet all the while, I think, Harry's heart remained true to his first girl-friend, pretty Doris Gregg.

The days drifted by like a dream; yet after a time Harry's active, energetic nature began to reassert itself. It was all very beautiful, but oh! such an indolent, do-nothing sort of life! To eat and sleep and dawdle through the drowsy hours—this seemed to comprise the sum of existence in Walumba Island.

And gradually Harry's heart began to turn with an intense longing in the direction of another island—another land beyond the sea where life was real, life was earnest.

Something of this Harry hinted to Luva as, one night, the two sat looking out over a moonlit sea outstretched far and wide under the great vault of silvery blue.

He noticed that the young girl started and turned pale. Her small fingers, locking themselves together, nervously fell in her lap, and the dark eyes which turned toward his own were suffused with tears.

"Perhaps Harry has—a—sister—in his own land for whom he cares more than Luva," she said in a low, tremulous voice. And Harry, turning very red, replied that he—er—well, he hadn't any sister. Only—a—he——

"Ah, I see!" Luva interrupted sorrowfully. "And you, with Mateo, would leave our happy Walumba," she went on before Harry could respond.

"It seems awfully ungrateful, and—all that sort of thing, Luva," Harry returned, half-apologetically; but this is too easy a life for me, and I suppose Mateo feels the same."

A little sob escaped the girl's lips, but she did not speak; and the not unnatural thought that Luva was very, very fond of him crossed Harry's mind. Would it break her heart if he should ever see a chance of leaving the island! Harry had read of such things.

Who should come strolling along just then but Mateo, with his eyes bent on the ground and a face of extreme melancholy; and as, seeing the two sitting side by side, he stopped short muttering something between his teeth, Harry became conscious of a feeling of impatience.

"What does he want to come prowling round for?" thought Harry rather ungraciously, as Luva rose suddenly to her feet; but in the next moment Harry reproached himself for his unkindness. "Poor old Mateo!" was his reflection; "it isn't his fault that he's no ladies' man. It's natural that Luva should prefer the company of a—er—young fellow nearer her own age——"

Here he stopped; for, greatly to his amazement, Luva sprang to the sailor's side!

"Mateo!" she said, without seeming to notice Harry's presence, "Mateo! is it, then, true that you grow tired of Walumba, all same as Harry?"

Mateo's bronzed face changed strangely. Perhaps it was the moonlight that gave it such a look of pallor.

'It would be as Heaven!" hoarsely exclaimed Mateo, "if I were not old and—Luva cared for me!"

Harry caught his breath. He had never dreamed of anything of the kind, and a great feeling of pity for the disappointment which he felt was awaiting the seaman came over him as Luva stood for a moment without replying—"Studying how she can let him down easy without hurting his feelings too much," was Harry's reflection.

But when, all at once, the young girl laid her head on the sailor's broad breast, and his arms flew round her like clock-work, Harry felt as though a bucket of cold water had suddenly been emptied down his spine.

"Luva cares for you more than all the world!"

Harry didn't stop to hear any more. Hot to his ears he stole off, wishing that it were possible to kick himself all the way back to the village.

· And so it was that when, on the following day, the American trading-schooner Sachem, Croffs, master, touched at Walumba on her return from the Friendly Islands, Harry Darrel agreed to work his passage back to the States in her.

The surprise of Mr. Riley and Father Terence knew no bounds when Harry announced his intentions. How any one who had once tasted the delights of existence in Walumba could ever desire to leave it passed the bounds of their belief.

But Harry was firm; and, partly consoled at the prospect of a son-in-law, Mr. Riley suffered himself to be pacified.

"If you'd not been so young, me lad," said the chief with simple sincerity, "maybe Luva might 'a' took a fancy for you in place of Matt, there. But I see from the first that she favored Matt. 'Sure, father,' she says one day whin I joked her a bit—'sure, Harry is good, and I like him as a brother,' sez she; 'but he's only a b'ye, afther all!"

Like David Copperfield, Harry felt very young indeed, after this. Yet he turned it off with some laughing reply—feeling rather sore inwardly, all the same.

But the Sachem soon completed her lading of copra (dried cocoanut kernels), beche de-la-mere, shell,

and amboyna wood. Then she was all ready for sea.

The last good-byes were said, a farewell waved from the Sachem's deck, and the schooner herself pointed out between the entrance in the circling reefs.

Mr. Riley and Father Terence, with Mateo and his betrothed, accompanied them thus far; and as, having exchanged the final farewells, the little party entered their canoe to return, Mateo grasped Harry's hand.

"Bon voyage, et Dieu vous garde!" he said huskily. "Mateo will never forget you! Now may you safely arrive in your America, and—find the Doctor's little girl awaiting your coming!"

A wave of the hand from Luva, then the canoe shot across the lagoon. The schooner bent to the breeze, and soon Walumba Island was lost in the distance.

CHAPTER XXVII.

SAFE IN GREGG ISLAND HARBOR.

NE HUNDRED and thirty-eight days of sea and sky, with all the varied moods and tenses into which the ocean conjugates itself, had passed. Calms when the vessel lay as on a sea of molten glass, with the pitch frying from the deck-seams under the burning sun. Favoring breezes when, with booms winged out, the Sachem went flying over the long, foam-crested waves, logging eight, nine and ten knots for twenty-four hours in succes-Gales when, under a rag of canvas, the schooner reeled and rolled madly through the tempestuous seas which swept the deck from the bowsprit-heel to the taffrail. Twenty-four hours of laying to through a cyclone in the Indian Ocean, when all hands, clinging to life-lines, felt assured the schooner could never outlive its fury. A Cape of Good Hope tempest lasting three days and nights, but driving the little vessel before it to calmer seas and clearer skies!

And so on and up across the equator again till, though it was only September, the contrast between the warmer latitudes left behind and the cooler ones of the North Atlantic was decidedly marked.

The Sachem was consigned to Boston parties. But after passing Cape Cod with a favoring breeze, the wind hauled into the east. The sky was hidden by dun-colored driving clouds, and the mercury in the barometer went down, down, till the indicator marked it at 28.93!

"We're goin' to catch it before we make old Boston light," said Captain Croffs, shaking his head ominously. And Captain Croffs proved a true prophet.

Long before the welcome beacon could be sighted the gale, veering from the east to the south-west with terrible suddenness, struck the schooner, fortunately not finding her unprepared.

But the reefed mainsail and the storm stay-sail flew into ribbons in an instant; and, finding the Sachem would not lay to under a balance reef-foresail, she was put before the gale, which increased as the darkness came on till it rivaled the cyclone of the Indian seas.

Past the twin lights of Cape Ann flew the schooner like a mad thing to the northward! The heavens and ocean were of inky blackness—the one relieved by the zigzag thunder-bolts, the other by great patches of phosphorescent foam!

A tremendous sea smashed the binnacle, the boats, and the bulwarks! Almost simultaneously the

mainmast snapped short off above the saddle of the boom!

It was a full hour before the mass of wreckage and spars was cut clear from the schooner's side. Then the pumps were tried, and it was found that the hull was still sound.

As nearly as could be estimated, the schooner was presumed to be up with Barmouth Point. A sharp lookout was being kept for that or indeed any light, when suddenly from forward came the always portentous cry:

"Breakers! Breakers ahead!"

And not only ahead, but to windward and to leeward! And the thunder of them lifted itself above that of the heavens—above even the awful bellowing of the tempest itself!

Before the wheel could be shifted, a vivid flash of lightning lit up the scene with the blinding glare of a cloudless noonday!

And lo! before them, not a cable's length distant, the rugged shores of an island rising out of the sea upon which the schooner, under her rag of balancereef foresail, was driving!

Captain Croffs had grown old in the maritime service and chanced death in too many forms to play the craven when he came to stand face to face with it!

So, as a pitchy darkness, seeming a thousand-fold more intense after the lurid glitter that had preceded it, shut down over the tempest-tossed sea, Captain Croffs shouted in the ear of Mr. Mitcher, his first officer:

"Good-by, old shipmate! It'll all be over inside of five minutes! The schooner'll go into tooth-picks direc'ly she strikes——"

Thus much Harry heard! Then, like a tiny star through the blackness shone a distant beam, and he uttered a great cry, for the lightning's flash had shown him the peculiar conformation of the southern end of the Island where lay the little haven! And Mateo had told him that the signal-light, which was never absent from the window of the old stone building on the slope beyond, sent its rays directly through the entrance of the inlet!

Springing to the wheel, Harry pushed the terrified helmsman to one side!

"If you can get the starboard anchor on the rail, sir, and stand by to let go when I sing out, I'll save the schooner!"

Over the thunder of the surf, even, rose his clear, confident voice. Captain Croffs knew that Harry came from somewhere about Barmouth and had spoken of being acquainted with parts of the coast, and anything was better than inaction!

The chains had been got up and the anchors in readiness the day before. All hands made their way forward, waist or neck-deep in water, as the vessel, driven like the veriest straw, went reeling and rolling toward what looked to be certain destruc-

Bare-headed and drenched to the skin, Harry, grasping the wheel-spokes, fixed his eye on the welcome light, which from a pin-head point of flame was growing into the proportions of a coal of fire—keeping it always within half a point of the swaying jib-boom end, either way.

What wild thoughts filled his mind as, with the deafening crash of the awful breakers, foaming half masthead high against the Island sides, in his ears, he steered the flying schooner! Whose hand had lighted the guiding beacon? If Doctor Gregg and Doris had not finished their summer stay (provided they had taken up their abode on Gregg Island, as usual), Doris herself might have done it, or at least so Harry was pleased to fancy. Or perhaps Dan had returned from his mysterious wanderings, and had himself been the active agent. Or——

A great surge of the sea lifted the Sachem high in air and swept her onward between two great walls of seething foam!

"Stand by to let go!"

"Aye! aye!" But the hail hardly reached him, beaten back as it was by the fury of the tempest!

It was touch-and-go, and God's grace for the rest! The signal-flame had intensified to a steady glow as Harry, throwing his weight on the spokes, sent the wheel over till the blocks grated!

The schooner's head flew round and the foresail shivered for a brief moment.

"Let go!"

"Now then, heave all together!" Following the hoarse command came the splash of the big anchor and the harsh rattle of the chain through the hawse-pipe. Then the Sachem, feeling the "snub" of the biting iron, swung at her moorings in water comparatively smooth except for the heavy swell hove in from the sea without.

Seamen are not given to gush, as a rule. Mr. Mitcher staid forward to direct the sailors in furling the rag of foresail. Captain Croffs came rolling aft, where Harry, trying to calm his inward excitement, was framing certain words of devout thanksgiving from a very grateful heart, and Captain Croffs cleared his throat once or twice, drew his hard, wet hand across his weather-beaten face, and said:

"My lad, you've saved my vessel. Ev'ry dollar me'n Mis' Croffs had'n the world is in her—no insurance. And seven lives atop of that—includin' yours! There ain't no words that'll rightly fill the bill. But.——"

And here Captain Croffs' feelings got the better of him and he plunged below, where a moment later he was heard bellowing for the steward to bring buckets and swabs to bale out the after cabin!

Mr. Mitcher was also roughly eloquent, and the crew were unstinted in their praise. So Harry felt

very happy as, a little later, receiving permission from Captain Croffs, he sculled himself ashore in the only boat left.

How his heart beat as, in his drenched apparel (for there wasn't a dry rag on board the schooner), he made his way up through the darkness and storm and stumbled along the path leading to the doorway.

Some one was astir within, for he saw the shadow of a bearded profile against the wall. Perhaps it was Doctor Gregg. Where was Don, that he did not bark?

As these questions passed swiftly through Harry's mind he knocked loudly.

To his disappointment a strange face appeared and a strange voice bade him enter as he briefly explained the condition of affairs—calling attention to the schooner's riding light, visible through the darkness.

"I am alone here," said his host, a grave, gray-bearded man with slightly-stooping shoulders and the shadow as of some sorrow on his bronzed features. "Doctor Gregg, the nominal owner of the Island, and my employer, was set ashore in our cutter this morning; and even the dog—a great favorite with Miss Doris—went with them."

While thus saying the speaker was replenishing the fire, after which he brought out dry clothing and set food before his half-famished visitor, who for a time was too busy satisfying the demands of appetite to ask the many questions with which his heart was so full.

"Some one on board your schooner must have known Gregg Island well to have brought her in in such a gale," his entertainer observed as Harry drew a long breath after swallowing his third cup of coffee.

"It was myself," said Harry smiling. "I have sailed in and out of this little harbor a great many times. Perhaps you may have heard Doctor Gregg speak of Harry Darrel. That is my name."

The man before him uttered a half-articulate exclamation and turned white to his very lips. But with a tremendous exertion of will he seemed to control himself.

"I have heard of you," he replied in a slightly tremulous voice. "But you are thought to have been drowned nearly a year since, with the sailor Matt. Only Miss Doris has always insisted you were alive and would some day come back. I have good news for you. Your father is living!"

Harry started to his feet and fixed his eyes on the speaker's face, which was working with some deephidden emotion.

"Can you tell me," he began, but his voice broke. Then stepping forward he placed a hand on either shoulder.

"I can't tell how I know it," he said tremulously, but—you are my father!"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

THE OLD HOMESTEAD REVISITED.

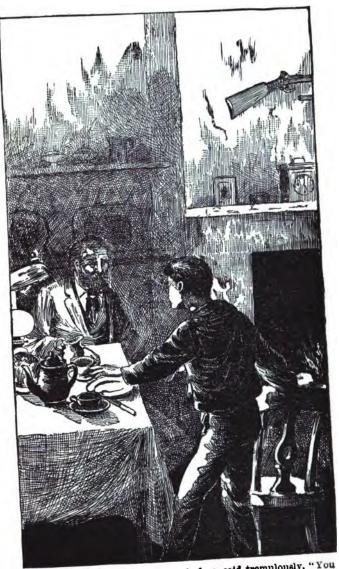
FOR THIS my son was dead and is alive again—was lost and is found."

The words involuntarily rose to Captain Darrel's lips as, after a silent embrace, the two sat hand in hand, hardly able to speak for the intensity of their emotions.

But it did not take long for the ice to break, and until the day dawned the two talked together, each having a story of wondrous interest to narrate to the other. And then Harry went on board the Sachem with his father, and the two piloted the schooner into Barmouth Harbor, where Captain Croffs at once made arrangements for having a new mainmast put in.

The Nixie number two was in her usual place, and Dan's joy at meeting with Harry was only a few degress less than that of Captain Darrel's.

And when he came to learn all that had befallen his friend since their last meeting, Dan's amazement was something marvelous. That Harry should in the interim 'ave been a resident of such ar island



Harry, fixing his eyes on the man's face, said tremulously, "You are my father!"—(See page 239.)

as Dan had read of in Herman Melville's "Typee' or "Omoo" almost passed the bounds of belief.

"And to think," said Dan emphatically, "that a good-lookin' chap like you should have let old Mateo, with his gray mustache, cut you out! Why, if you'd put vourself for'ard a bit you might 'a' married Miss Luva yourself! If it had 'a' been me, now, I'd have tried my prettiest, and then some day been boss of the island myself!"

Harry laughed to cover the shadowy embarrassment Dan's remark had aroused.

"I shouldn't have found my father if I had," he replied with a loving glance at Captain Darrel, who sat near them under the awning over the cutter's quarter.

"Ye—e—es," was Dan's hesitating response, "I know; but——"

Though Dan did not complete the sentence, it was evident that paternal claims would have been of secondary importance in comparison with the brilliant prospects Harry had, so to speak, turned his back upon.

But he abandoned the subject, and straightway forgot it for the time in pointing out for Harry's benefit the different yachts belonging to the Eastern Squadron which were lying at anchor in the Harbor.

For the fact that during the previous season Barmouth was visited by an English lord—young, good-

looking, and enormously wealthy—had been bruited widely abroad; and when it was known that Lord Masters' yacht had for the second time dropped anchor in the same port, the tide of fashion set Barmouthward with even greater force than before.

Another hotel was built, the number of select boarding-houses doubled, while summer cottages sprung up, so to speak, like Jonah's gourd—in the night.

"And folks do say," drawled Dan, as, in his capacity of gossip, he branched off upon purely social topics, "that Lord Masters never'd have come here a secon' time only for bein' despretly smit'n with the Doctor's little girl. What's the matter, Harry?"

For the latter had started like one who has inadvertently placed himself on the business-end of a tack!

With a ghastly smile Harry muttered something about a sudden sharp pain, and Dan went on with his budget of news:

"Young Goldin's here agin. So's Blair Welter invited himself, same's he did last year. They both try awful hard to get in with Masters, but 'tain't no good; he's a sight more hand'n glove with me or Cap'n Darrel than either of 'em."

As if in verification of this, the Psyche's boat, with Lord Masters, elaborately dressed, handling the tiller ropes, pulled alongside the cutter a moment later.

Lord Masters sprang over the rail and dismissed the boat.

He greeted Dan familiarly and shook Captain Darrel warmly by the hand, after which the latter formally introduced his son, with a brief word of explanation as to his unexpected appearance.

Lord Masters' lower jaw dropped slightly.

"Bless my heart!" he exclaimed; "you don't mean it! More like a romance in real life than ever! Continued from last year, don't you know! A—Darrel—happy to meet you, I'm sure!"

But whether Lord Masters was strictly truthful in this last assertion I do not pretend to say, as he never visited Doctor Gregg's hospitable dwelling but, sooner or later, the name of Harry Darrel was sure to be introduced by Doctor Gregg, who mourned him as dead, or Doris, who, on the contrary, calmly expressed her perfect assurance that Harry was in the land of the living and would some day return to his own—meaning Gregg Island, for which an almost fabulous price had been offered that very season.

True, Lord Masters felt thoroughly convinced that as a possible rival the young American stood not the slightest chance in comparison with his own superior social status; yet he could not prevent a slight feeling of uneasiness as he glanced at the athletic, handsome, well-dressed young fellow who had been the hero of so many strange adventures.

"S'pose you haven't seen the Doctor and Miss Doris yet?" he remarked, after a somewhat awkward pause; and Harry quietly replied in the negative.

"I thought of calling there some time to-day," the latter returned with a very poor affectation of carelessness.

Lord Masters said he was sorry (though he wasn't), but the Doctor and Miss Doris had promised to accompany a sailing-party in the Psyche that very day, not to return till late in the evening. Perhaps Mr.—er—Darrel would make one——"

But young Mr. Darrel rather shortly replied in the negative, and Lord Masters skipped nimbly up the landing-stage.

"Bound straight for the Doctor's!" as Dan remarked, with an expressive grin.

If Captain Darrel had any conception of what was passing in his son's mind, he gave no sign. Indeed, to all outward appearance the Captain seemed to be thinking of something of a very different nature.

"Harry," he asked abruptly, "does the painting of the brig Newton still hang in the front room of the old Welter homestead?"

"It did when it was last there." And as a sudden remembrance of his curious dream came to him Harry related it to his father.

But Captain Darrel listened with only a passing interest.

"The picture belongs to me. I have a fancy I should like to have it again for old associations' sake," he said. "Suppose we take a run to Wayback to-day and return by the last train?"

Harry was perfectly willing, and two hours later they were being driven from the station at North Wayback to the little sleepy-hollow of a village where Harry's early years had been spent.

Wayback had not changed in the least excepting that it looked smaller and its one elm-shaded street more deserted than ever—so Harry asserted as the trio, unrecognized by the few passing pedestrians, made their way toward the Welter homestead.

The front door of the quaint old-time mansion stood wide open, for Wayback knew naught of sneak-thieves or predatory tramps. Mr. Jabez Welter in his shirt-sleeves, looking meaner and more given to sharp practice than ever, glanced up from the writing-table with a start as the two entered his so-called office.

Captain Darrel he did not recognize as a matter of course. Indeed, Captain John Darrel had gone down in the brig Newton more than a dozen years before.

Harry himself had grown broader, browner, and more manly; but Mr. Welter knew him in a moment; and, as might be supposed, Mr. Welter turned slightly pale.

"Why," he stammered, "this is a-an-unex-

pected surprise; the second one of the kind, Harry, that you have given us! We heard that you were drowned, or something of the sort; but I am," said Mr. Welter, extending his hand with a visible effort, "glad to see you."

"You are not!" bluntly returned Harry, ignoring the outstretched hand; "nor am I glad to see you, knowing as much as I do about you—for example, how you plotted with Marlock to buy Gregg Island, and thus get hold of the buried treasure of whose existence only Marlock knew!"

"It is—a—it is false!" returned Jabez Welter, sinking back in his chair. But his guilty face gave the lie direct to his words.

"This is my father, Captain John Darrel, who was not lost at sea, as every one supposed," Harry went on, paying no heed whatever to Mr. Welter's agitated denial.

Jabez Welter's dry lips moved, but no sound came from them. He sat staring helplessly at the silent, bronzed seaman, who was regarding him with a look of supreme contempt.

"The old painting of the brig Newton, in the upper front room, is mine; I have come to take it away," said Captain Darrel curtly.

But Mr. Welter, recovering a little from his astonishment and dismay, shook his head.

He was sorry, he said, but he had always understood that the picture belonged to his dear, lamented

brother Caleb, and as such it had, with the other personal property, been left to himself as the sole heir; for, as Harry would remember, Caleb had never made a will.

"I remember you said so, and I always wondered whether you were lying or not!" was the uncompromising reply. "Come, father, let us go get your picture. I don't want to breathe the same air with this man any longer than I can help!"

Thus saying, Harry, turning from the room, ascended the well-remembered stairs, followed by Captain Darrel.

Jabez Welter brought up the rear volubly expostulating, and even threatening the intruders with "the law;" to which, I need hardly say, not the slightest heed was given.

A flood of memories swept across Harry's mind as he looked about the room. How much had happened since he last slept within its walls! What ——

"I protest against this—this—illegal act!" sputtered Mr. Welter from the door-way, as, mounting a chair, Captain Darrel coolly took down the old picture and blew the dust from its tarnished frame.

"All right! Protest if it pleases you any; that don't trouble me in the least!" imperturbably returned Harry's father. "Now then, Harry."

But Harry's sharp eyes had noticed something unusual in the surface of the wall from which the picture was removed—nothing more nor less than the door to one of those old-fashioned square wallclosets so common in old-time houses, which the painting had completely hidden.

Springing nimbly on the chair he pulled it open. Mr. Welter uttered a cry of expostulation in vain.

On one of the two narrow shelves stood a japanned tin trunk that Harry vaguely remembered as one which had contained Caleb Welter's papers in his life-time; and as he stepped to the floor with this in his hand Jabez rushed forward with protruding eyeballs.

"Stop! You've no right! That was Caleb's! I've hunted the house over for it!" he gasped.

Captain Darrel pushed him to one side impatiently.

"Suppose it is," he said; "what then? Your brother had papers belonging to me in his keeping—a transfer of half the brig Newton to me, among others. I'd like to know if that is still in existence. Open the trunk, Harry!"

The document in question did not at once come to light. In fact the first paper that met Harry's eager gaze was labeled:

"The last will and testament of Caleb Welter."

Jabez Welter clutched convulsively at his neckcloth as Harry read the words aloud.

"What of that?" he yelled. "I didn't know there was any will; but it don't matter! What little poor Caleb had to devise he would leave to me as a matter of course!" Jabez Welter was mistaken, however. His brother had willed him the homestead and a thousand dollars in money. Everything else went without reserve to Mr. Daniel Linscott, attorney, of Boston, to be held in trust for Mr. Welter's ward, Henry J. Darrel, till such time as the latter came of age.

Harry looked up with a bewildered air.

"I don't see what Mr. Caleb had to leave," he said.

"I do," returned his father. And Captain Darrel took from the trunk bank-books, certificates of bank stock and railroad shares, one by one, which, estimated roughly, would amount to nearly twenty-five thousand dollars.

At the bottom was a sealed letter, directed to Harry in Caleb Welter's handwriting. Its contents were characteristic, brief, and to the point:

I leave you the bulk of my hoarded wealth as a slight reparation for a wrong done your dead father. In other words, I cheated his estate out of eight thousand dollars. Make a good use of your money, and don't let Jabez get hold of it.

CALEB WELTER.

Mr. Jabez Welter cursed, raved, and would have torn his hair, only that it was short, stiff, and scanty; but all in vain.

Carrying his picture under one arm, and the trunk with its valuable contents under the other, Captain Darrel, with his son, left the house.

"Mr. Linscott will be notified at once. He shall attend to probating the will and all necessary business. You can communicate with him."

This was the only response Captain Darrel made to Mr. Welter's objurgations. As they turned to look back at the Welter homestead for the last time they saw on the old piazza the form of Jabez Welter performing an animated war-dance of disappointed rage, in which his shirt-sleeves and short trousers were conspicuous features.

Like one in a dream Harry accompanied his father back to Barmouth. Only one question he asked on the way:

"How did Caleb Welter wrong you, father?"

"I suspect that he got the money on my half of the brig, and converted the money to his own use instead of applying it to your benefit. I have reason to think so, at least. But, like everyone else, I supposed he died poor, so I made no inquiry on my return."

"Perhaps, dying suddenly, he could not speak of the will he had had drawn or mention its hidingplace," thoughtfully suggested Harry.

"Or else he did not dare to, knowing Jabez Welter so well," was his father's significant reply.

CHAPTER XXIX.

"AND THE WORLD WENT WELL WITH THEM, THEN."

IT GOES without saying that I have interwoven much of fact with the threads of fiction which run throughout my story.

For obvious reasons, therefore, fictitious names of the persons and places I have mentioned are substituted for the true ones. Thus Barmouth represents my own native sea-board town, where many of the incidents which suggested this narrative occurred, and where some of its actors live at the present day.

So now, as I write the heading to this the final chapter, a soft south wind from the Harbor is whispering certain secrets overheard in the town below to the leaves of the woodbine about my wide-open window, which looks far out over the sea, where, in the distance, is a tiny speck which I know to be Gregg Island.

Thus it is that I learn that Lord Masters is not expected to return to Barmouth this present approaching season. There are more than strong intimations that a condescending proffer made by his lordship of his heart, hand, and pecuniary accompa-

niments, was mildly yet firmly refused by Doctor Gregg's little girl—a miss not yet out of her teens, and as good as she is pretty—which is saying much.

I learn through the same convenient medium that the people of Barmouth have just discovered that Doris is a prospective heiress to vast wealth—some say fifty thousand dollars, some five hundred thousand dollars, according to the vividness of their several imaginations; and although no one has been able to get at the exact facts in the case, there is a well-founded rumor that Doctor Gregg did discover the treasure which was always presumed to have been concealed by his freebooting ancestor on Gregg Island.

I hear that young Harry Darrel, who is attending Boston University with a view of a collegiate education in the near future, corresponds regularly with Miss Doris Gregg, and that the gossip-loving people of Barmouth are drawing their own conclusions from this significant fact—particularly as Doctor Gregg and Captain Darrel have gradually become almost inseparable friends since the latter bought in his son's name the pretty cottage next to the Doctor's homestead.

Dan, from choice, still remains on Gregg Island, though he regularly sends a goodly share of his earnings to his parents, whom he has visited once since leaving his home in the Vermont hills. His admiration and friendship for Harry, his first friend, grow

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stronger as the days go on, and he has finally decided that, after all, Harry was wise in not remaining on Walumba Island, despite its many inducements.

I hear it whispered that Blair Welter is developing by the aid of young Goldin into a fast young man, but further than this I do not know—or care to. His father, Jabez Welter, still lives his solitary, penurious life in Wayback.

Don, the dog—last but not least—is Doris' inseparable companion. This I know from my own personal observation, as I meet them together whether walking or riding.

Gregg Island is not to be sold. Harry, so it is stated, declares that money cannot buy it. It is Gregg Island no longer, but "Fortune Island;" at least that is the name he has given it; and I hear rumors that a handsome summer residence is to be built there by Harry and Doctor Gregg conjointly; which brings me to the end of my story.

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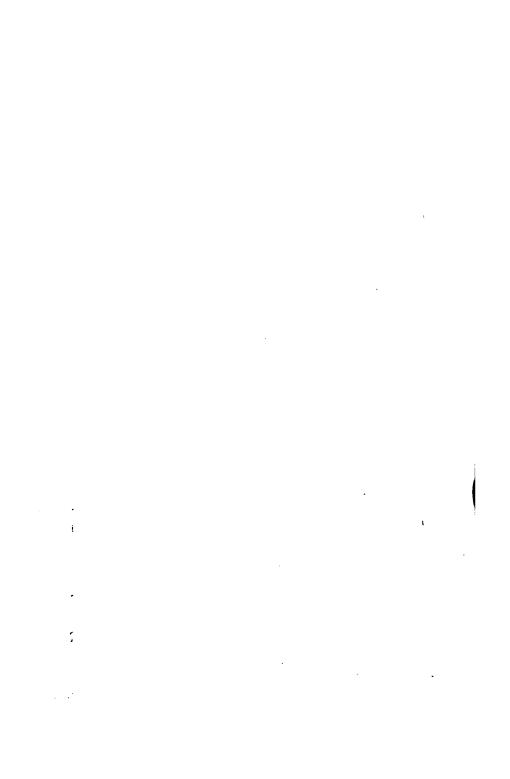
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